

Stalin's Cold War Strategy, 1945-1953

By

2015

Youngjun Kim

Submitted to the graduate degree program in History and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Chairperson Adrian R Lewis

Theodore A Wilson

Jacob W Kipp

Eve Levin

Mariya Y Omeliceva

Date Defended: March 31, 2015

The Dissertation Committee for Youngjun Kim
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Stalin's Cold War Strategy, 1945-1953

Chairperson Adrian R Lewis

Date approved: March 31, 2015

Abstract

Today, the post-Cold War world order based on the US unipolar supremacy is no longer a main paradigm in world affairs. Militarily, the US number one global power has still no questions. However, other powers have risen economically, diplomatically and militarily. China challenges a post-Second World War order, such as the Washington consensus, and Russia challenges a post-Cold War order, such as a recent Ukraine crisis. However, potential nuclear states, including Iran and North Korea, challenge nuclear world order that the US set and radical Islamic terrorist groups, including so-called Islamic State, challenges the US hegemony in Middle East. Uncertainty about a new world order has increased because of these diverse international events which challenge the US hegemony. This uncertain world situation was similar to the post-Second World War. After the Cold War, the winner was no question. However, multiple winners in 1945 led an uncertainty about a new world order. Studies on the post Second World War world situations are useful historical lessons if we look at today's uncertain world order.

This dissertation examines Stalin's Cold War strategy from 1945 to 1953 with a new interpretative perspective. I argue that Stalin actively used new strategic situations for the Soviet Union's interest. Stalin did not hesitate to manipulate his junior partners who paid prices for enhancing a security of the Soviet Union. To the Kremlin, foreign communist countries were useful tools and means as security buffer zones, not revolutionary brothers. Scholars often explain that Stalin was a passionate ideologue based on his speeches and words. However, I argue that Stalin's Cold War strategy was fundamentally based on his realistic calculation, not a revolutionary ideology. Stalin was not his political rival, Leon Trotsky who was an idealistic romanticist and believed the third world permanent revolutions. Instead, Stalin was a Machiavellian realist and a cold calculator, especially in a foreign policy realm.

Acknowledgement

This dissertation signals the efforts of support of numerous people. First of all, my special thanks go to my supervisor professor Adrian R Lewis. Professor Lewis was not only an excellent supervisor and a role model scholar but also a warm mentor and friend. Professor Lewis always took care my study, family, life and career development. Professor Lewis is my family, friend and a role model. I also appreciate Professor Eve Levin for her wonderful support and endless mentoring for my study. She red every single word and sentence of my dissertation even though she was very busy. Without her warm support and help, my dissertation would not be possible to end. I also appreciate for my dissertation committee members, Professor Theodore A Wilson, Professor Jacob W Kipp, Professor Mariya Y Omelicheva, Professor Bruce Cumings and Professor Charles K Armstrong. They provided not only a wonderful advice for my studies but also a great mentorship and warm support for my career and life. Without them, I do not know how I finish my dissertation. In particular, Professor Wilson's couple and Professor Kipp's couple sometimes invited my family at their homes and generously supported my family with their great friendship. Professor Cumings and Professor Armstrong always supported my research and career even though they are physically far from my campus in Lawrence, Kansas.

I also appreciate for a special friendship of Professor Akiko Takeyama and Mr. William Steele. They are one of my family's best friends in Lawrence. They showed wonderful support and warm friendship to my family. I also appreciate for a special friendship of a family of Dr. Song Ji Hyun and Dr. Kim Min Sung. They are one of my family's best friends in Lawrence and they always supported my family with love and friendship. I should acknowledge Republic of Korean Army (ROK)'s family in Kansas, Major Ann Gi Hyun's family at KU, LTC Lim Youn Gap's family, and LTC Kim Kwang Soo's family at Fort Leavenworth for their wonderful

support and special friendship for my family. Because of their warm care and support, my family had a great time in Kansas. I should acknowledge KU family, Professor Elaine Gerbert, Professor Felix Moos, Professor Jeffery Moran, his wife Susan Kang, Professor Jenifer Weber, Professor Luis Corteguera, COL Mike Denning and LTC Randy Mastern. In particular, Professor Felix Moos, the veteran air plane pilot of the Korean War mentored my study not only academically but also spiritually. I also thanks to support of Mr. Chuck Ledford and his wife Bobby Ledford in Belton, Missouri. I also appreciate for Fort Leavenworth's family, LTC Eric Price's family at School of Advanced Military Studies, Professor Gary J Bjorge of Command and General Staff College, COL Tomas Wilhelm and Major Raymond Finchness's family of Foreign Military Studies Office (FNSO) because they showed wonderful support and warm care for my family. In particular, Mr. Raymond Finchness has been an excellent mentor for me and his family provided unconditional support for my family. I believe that my experiences with him as International Senior Research Fellow at the FMSO developed my perspective and analytical ability towards Korean security issues.

I never forgot my mentors, colleagues and friends in Korea. General Lee Jae Wook's family and General Yoon Jong Ok's family were my spiritual supporters and roles models. I appreciate for their support. I should recognize Korean National Defense University's (KNDU) faculty group, Professor Kim Youl Soo, Professor Park Chang Hee, Professor Son Kyong Ho, Professor Park Young Jun, Professor Park Min Hyung, Professor Lee Byong Gu, Professor Roh Yong Gu and Professor Lee Hong Sub. Especially, Professor Kim Youl Soo fully supported me with his great mentorship even after his retirement from KNDU. Professor Son Kyong Ho always took care of my family with his great support and mentorship. I never forgot my mentors of the ROK Army. General Lee Jae Hyong, COL Yoo Jae Gual, COL Shin Ul Shik, LTC Ha

Kyong Seok, LTC Kwak Tae Shin, LTC Kim Sang Bum, Major Park Jung Hoon, Major Shin Jae Hoon, Major Lim Geun Young, and Major Gang Ji Hoon. Especially, LTC Kwak Tae Shin was my role models when I started Ph.D program. His special and endless advice was a great help for my study. Major Shin Jae Hoon is always my best mentor and friend. I appreciate my respectful high school teachers Ko Jae Won and Min Suk Young. My special thanks goes to my family's mentor and supporter, General Nam Jae Joon, General Heo Pyong Hwan, Honorable Kim Man Bok and COL Lee Dong Ho.

Without my family, I could not do anything. I do not know how much I thank you enough. My wife, Eunsil Jang, is my endless supporter, friend and love. Without her unconditional support, sacrifice and love, I could not do anything. My beautiful three kids, Donghyun Kim, Sooyoun Kim and Bumjun Kim, are my special presents from God. I will never forget a beautiful time with my wife and three kids in Lawrence and KU campus. I never forget my beloved father, Kim Byong Hyun, and mother, Park Youn Kum every day in my life. My father in heaven always took care of my family and my study. My mother is always my excellent mentor, friend, and supporter for my study and life. Without her unconditional love and sacrifice, my life would have been meaningless. I will dedicate my dissertation to my mother and my wife. My wonderful beloved sisters, Kim Bo Ryong and Kim Bo Mi, are meaning of my life. I cannot imagine my life without their love. They have always spiritually been parts of mine. My brother in law, Lim Jong Min, has been always my mentor and brother. I appreciate for his love and care of my family. My wonderful father in law, Jang Yong Hwan, and mother in law, Myo Sim Hwa, are my greatest supporters. Their endless love and support greatly help my study and family life. My sister in law, Jang Un Jung, and her son, Jang Jae Won, give me their wonderful love and support. I really appreciate for my wife's family's support regarding my life and study here.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Stalin's Global Security Strategy at the Initial Stage of the Cold War, 1945-1953	6
3.	The Origins of the Junior Partner's Forces.....	51
4.	The Soviet Union's War against the Japanese: Operation August Storm.....	92
5.	The Soviet Union's Influence and Policy – Sovietization of Society.....	120
6.	The Origins of the Soviet Army and Development of Soviets' Strategy for a War	170
7.	External Factor: Chinese Civil War's Influence	211
8.	The Beginning of the War: Stalin's Strategic Objective	244
9.	Conclusion.....	285
10.	Bibliographies.....	286

1. Introduction

Russia has always been one of the most significant geo-strategic players in world affairs. After the Cold War, the Soviet Union broke up but did not collapse. Russia tried to be westernized economically, politically, socially and culturally, including free market, privatization of national industries, democracy, and freedom of speech. However, Russian people had largely suffered from a chaotic situation under the Yeltsin period, including increasing gap between rich and poor, corruption of government and business and chaotic political situations. Russian people remembers this period as a humiliation and miss nostalgia about a great power status of the past. Russian people has a consensus unanimously for one subject, nuclear weapons. Whether left wing, right wing, westernizers and communists in Russia, they supported to keep nuclear weapons for maintaining Russia's greatness. Even Russian Orthodox Church supports to keep nuclear weapons for Russia's great power.¹ Over the last decade, Putin's Russia tried to rebuild greatness of Russia politically, economically, militarily and diplomatically. Putin's government never allowed radical Islamic independent movement of Chechen and NATO memberships of Georgia and Ukraine. After annexing Crimea peninsula, Putin's popularity among Russian people is higher than any time before. Russian people always support greatness of Russia and wants powerful Russia back to a world stage. Putin's nationalistic and pragmatic approaches to world affairs are continuity from Stalin's Cold War strategy. Pragmatic interests based on statist's realism is a key foundation of Russian foreign policy. Revolutionary ideology has never been a first value before nationalist realism in Russia. Rhetoric is a just rhetoric. In reality, leaders of Russia always followed one key value: greatness of Russian power and love to their motherland. Today's uncertainty about a new

¹ Mariya Y. Omelicheva, "Russian Security and Nuclear Policies: Successor to the Superpower Arsenal?" In *International Studies Online*, eds. R. A. Denemark (Ed.) accessed April 13, 2015 <http://www.isacompendium.com/public/online> (accessed April 13, 2015)

world order leads Russian people to passionately seek a great power status of Russia again.² Ukraine crisis was not just one event but the beginning of ambitions of Russian people towards a new world order. Putin's current foreign policy and strategy are originated from Stalin's strategy and foreign policy after the Second World War. Uncertainty dominated in world situation after the Second World War and multiple geo-strategic players tried to build a new world order for their own interest. If we want to understand a current Russian strategic approach to a world, studies on post Second World War Russian situations are very useful historical studies because of similarities of situation and leader's approach.

This paper deals with Stalin's Cold War strategy from 1945 to 1953. In a foreign policy realm, Stalin was a realistic leader based on a cold calculation, not ideological leader based on revolutionary ideology. Stalin's speech and words were largely ideological revolutionary terms. However, his actions, foreign policy, always were based on pragmatism. Many scholars described the Cold War as a battle between two different ideological parties and especially interpreted the Soviet Union's leaders as ideological revolutionaries. However, I argue that pragmatic and realistic interests were always top priorities to the Soviet Union's leaders rather than ideological objectives. In particular, Stalin was not an idealist who believed a permanent revolution. His historical role was counter-revolution. Stalin was not Trotsky. Stalin wanted to make Russia as a great power

² Please see about world's uncertainty of a new world order. Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World: Release 2.0* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 2011); Thomas L. Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum, *That Used to be us: how America fell behind in the world it invented and how we can come back* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011); Richard N. Haass, *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America's House in Order* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2014); Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2013); Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2014); Joseph S Nye Jr., *Is the American Century Over* (New York, NY: Polity, 2015); Nial Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005); Andrew J. Bacevich, *Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country* (New York, NY: Picador, 2014)

with economic, military and diplomatic resources. In 1945, Stalin's perspective towards world affairs came from his experiences from Russian Civil War (1917-1922) to the Second World War (1939-1945). During the Russian Civil War, numerous foreign interventions, including the US, Japan and the Great Britain, humiliated Russian people when Russia was weak and in chaos. Adolf Hitler broken Non-Aggression Agreement with the Soviet Union and the Nazi Army conducted a brutal extermination of warfare against Russian people. When the Nazi Army started Operation Barbarossa, for the first few days Stalin hesitated to believe an invasion of German army. From the Second World War, more than 20 million Russian people were wounded and died. Arguably, every member of all Russian families lost his or her family member from the war. During the war, allies of the Soviet Union, such as the US and the UK, delayed to make the second front against Nazi Germany while Russian soldiers died and died in the Eastern Front. Although the US supported massive logistics and supplied to the Russian Army in the Eastern Front, Russian Army lost unnecessarily so many casualties because of delay of the Second Front making. The War against Germany was a war of Russian human resources and American money. Stalin asked the US to make the second front as soon as possible. However, the second front was delayed until leaders of the US and the UK believed that Russian Army would finally win against the German Army. This was humiliating and a deep scar to Stalin. Moreover, American partner did not tell about a making of atomic bombs to Stalin until bombings in Japan in 1945. From those experiences, Stalin came to believe that a strong motherland is a key objective of his foreign policy agendas. For this, Stalin believed that the Soviet Union needed security buffer zones as many as possible for defending against potential external threats from the US, Japan and Germany.

I argue that Stalin's Cold War Strategy from 1945 to 1953 was based on his realistic statist's view, not a revolutionary romanticism. In this period, Stalin manipulated his junior

partners for enhancing security of the Soviet Union. To the Kremlin, small foreign communist countries were useful means and tools for the Soviet Union's security as security buffer zones, not equal revolutionary brothers. In particular, unexpected victory of Mao's communists was a new challenge to Stalin because Stalin believed that world order in Asia was already set up via his negotiation with Chinese nationalists. Stalin already benefitted from a treaty with Chinese nationalists before Mao's victory because he believed that Chinese nationalists would win the war against Mao's communists. From this negotiation, Stalin received rights of Changchun railway, Port Arthur and others from Chinese nationalists. Stalin's approach towards Chinese Civil War was not ideological but practical. Unexpectedly, Mao won the Civil War and Stalin had to have a new negotiation with Mao. Stalin worried about another Tito in Asia and a rising power of China as a rival. Stalin's worst scenario was a good relation between the US and Mao's China. Stalin's most interest was in Europe not in Asia. Stalin needed to reset a new strategic order in Asia because of unexpected victory of Mao's communists. When Stalin had a negotiation with Mao in Moscow on early January 1950, he made concession to Mao. Mao's China was a great security buffer zone for the Soviet Union against potential threat of the US and Japan near future. The second front in Asia would be a great idea for the Soviet Union against the enemy, the US, in Asia without a direct participation of the Soviet Union. To recover Russia's economy from a devastation and develop atomic bombs were top priorities to Stalin. In this context, Stalin started to manipulate his junior partners' political ambition and revolutionary romanticism for not only enhancing security of the Soviet Union but also allowing sufficient time for economic recovery and making of atomic bombs.

In the late 1940's, Stalin knew that the Soviet Union cannot win any wars in Asia where the US navy and air power dominated. However, Stalin supported that his junior partners could

start a war against allies of the US in 1950. To Stalin, this adventure could be a useful test to check willingness of the US intervention in foreign territories and the US air power capabilities without Russian soldiers' sacrifice. Stalin would not lose anything from his multiple scenarios of his junior partners' political gamble in 1950. In this context, the first hot war during the Cold War started from Stalin's global chess table. Whether Stalin intended or not, as the war went by, Stalin's junior partners not only paid the price for cost of war and but also lured the enemy, the US, into an area where Stalin did not have special interest. Stalin enjoyed the US intervention into an internationalized civil war in East Asia. Stalin wanted to delay the war as long as possible because his junior partners could lure the US without sacrifice of Russian soldiers. The first hot war of the Cold War finally ended when Stalin died in 1953. As Stalin expected, this war prevented a good relationship between the US and China until détente in early 1970s, delayed a total war in Europe where Stalin had most interest and allowed a sufficient time to the Soviet Union to build atomic and nuclear weapons. Stalin did not intentionally start the Cold War, but tried to use an international situation to maximize benefits for the Soviet Union. Stalin was neither Trotsky who believed that the Soviet Union continually has to support permanent revolutions in the third world nor a revolutionary idealist, but a Machiavellian realist and a cold calculator.

In the first chapter, I argue that Stalin manipulated the war for interest of the Soviet Union and his junior partners paid the price for the war. In the second and third chapter, I explain the elite group and vision of junior partner state. In the fourth chapter, I explain a policy of the Soviet Union towards junior partner state, such as Sovietization of society. In the fifth chapter, I demonstrate how Stalin used the war for his interest. In the sixth chapter, I explain an external factor of the Chinese Civil War for the war. In the final chapter, I describe the first hot war of the Cold War.

2. Stalin's Global Security Strategy at the Initial Stage of the Cold War, 1945-1953

故兵聞拙速, 未睹巧之久也。夫兵久而國利者, 未之有也。

*Though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been associated with long delays. There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.*³

- Sun Tzu

是故始如處女, 敵人開戶, 後如脫兔, 敵不及拒。

*At first, then, exhibit the coyness of a maiden, until the enemy gives you an opening; afterwards emulate the rapidity of a running hare, and it will be too late for the enemy to oppose you.*⁴

- Sun Tzu

When the Second World War ended in 1945, the Soviet Union and the United States were preoccupied with making a new world order and showed an attitude of indifference towards the small and poor unknown country: Korea. The winners of the Second World War were calculating their own interests and constructing a new world order. The Soviet Union stopped their advance after the victory over the Japanese Empire in Korea and the 38th parallel was easily accepted as the temporary border without serious debate by the Soviet Union.⁵ The Soviet armed forces entered northern Korea on August 8 of 1945 and swept southward. The Soviet Union could have advanced down the Peninsula to the port of Pusan and Jeju Island if Stalin had wanted. The United States Army had no significant forces in Korea to stop it. However, the Soviet armed forces halted their advancement. Knowledge that the US had significant airpower of the atomic bomb may have influenced Stalin's decision.⁶

³ Sun Tzu, 노병천역, *The Art of War: 도해손자병법* (孫子兵法), (Seoul: 가나출판사, 1996), 60.

⁴ *Ibid*, 284.

⁵ Bruce Cumings shows that the 38th parallel was easily made by Dean Rusk and Charles Bonesteel of the State Department. Rusk later said, they chose the 38th parallel because it included the highly centralized capital at Seoul in the American zone. The United State consulted no other powers in coming to this decision, least of all any Koreans. The Soviet Union accepted the 38th parallel decision silently, without comment of written agreement. See Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2010), 103-104.

⁶ Professor Eve Levin advised me to read Tsuyoshy Hasegawa's book because he actually has consulted American, Japanese, and Russian documents unlike other authors. Tsuyoshy Hasegawa has consulted American, Japanese, and Russian documents regarding this issue. He

Most people from the United States and the Soviet Union did not know where Korea was and had more interest in Europe. At that time, Korea was a poor country and partly industrialized as a Japanese colony. Although the geo-political location of Korea had been important, in 1945, the future of China and Japan was not decided yet. Only the Korean people had a strong passion and dream about their own future. In order to maintain public order and security, the US and Soviet armed forces did not immediately approve any Korean armed forces or political parties. At this stage, the Korean people believed they would take the initiative for their own future and their first modern-nation state. Important figures for Korea's future, included Syngman Rhee (李承晩), Kim Ku (金九), Kim Kyu Sik (金奎植), Mu Chong (武亭), Ho Ka-I (許哥而), Kim Tu Bong(金科奉) and Kim Il Sung (金日成), who returned to their home country from Manchuria, China or the United States to participate in the creation of a new Korean government. Others, who remained in Korea during the Japanese colonial period, including Yuh Woon Hyung (呂運亨), Cho Man Sik (曹晩植) and Park Hun Young (朴憲永), also participated in this task. Each of these leaders had different blueprints, roadmaps and ambitions for the newly-independent country. But, their dreams were ended at a high cost to economic infrastructure and human life.

advances the thesis that the Japanese surrendered when they did out of fear that the Soviet Union might invade Japan, and they preferred to surrender to the Americans. Eve Levin, e-mail message to the author, April 26, 2014. See Tsuyoshy Hasegawa, *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the surrender of Japan* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005)

Historiography on Stalin's Strategy toward the Korean War

In the Korean War, Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung had different interests and schemes invested in the war's outcome. Stalin maintained his strategy of low risk and maximum gain. Thereby, Stalin made the world that he wanted to make by cementing the US-China conflict and preventing major war in Europe. Mao did not have a particular strategy toward the Korean War. Mao's top priority was an invasion of Taiwan and to get the direct support of the Soviet Union for the invasion. From the outcome of the war, Mao unexpectedly established and enhanced China's international reputation, and stabilized its domestic politics. To Kim Il Sung, the war was a total war and a revolutionary war. Because of his inexperienced amateurism and immature idealism, his ineffective strategy led to an unwanted, internationalized civil war. During the war, Kim was repeatedly humiliated by his allies, the Soviet Union and China, rather than his enemies, the US and the ROK army. From his humiliation, he started to create the Juche Ideology, self-reliance theory, for strengthening his dictatorship, an ideology that has remained in effect to this day.

Between 1945 and 1950, Stalin's strategy toward the Korean peninsula changed. Many scholars have studied Stalin's strategy in the Korean War. These studies were developed from declassified sources. Many scholars agreed that Europe was the strategic center for the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union expected Europe would be the site of a decisive war between the Soviet Union and the United States. Regarding the perspectives on Stalin's strategic thinking, the Korean War historiography had been similar to the Cold War historiography consisting of traditional, revisionist and post-revisionist perspectives.

After the Korean War, traditional scholars blamed the bloody war on the aggressive expansionism of the Soviet Union. At this time, those scholars believed that the Kremlin controlled all important decision making for communist countries in the region. Revisionist scholars blamed the US's aggressive imperialism and argued that the Soviet Union wanted to defend themselves from the US threats regarding the origins of the Cold War in their studies during the 1970's and the 1980's. Bruce Cumings finds the origins of the Korean War in the domestic necessities of Korean society. Cumings argues that the Korean War was a Civil War and it could not have been avoided regardless of the intention of the Soviet Union and the United States. He also argued that North Korea enjoyed their autonomy and this was different from East European countries at that time. Cumings introduces the Korean factor to the studies of the Korean War.⁷ Military Historian Allan R Millett also introduces the Korean factor into the studies of the Korean War and recognized the active role of the Korean people before and during the Korean War.⁸

In contrast, Andrei Lankov and Kathryn Weathersby oppose Cumings' argument based on new Russian declassified documents and argued that the Soviet's civil-military administration made the important decisions and guided every detail of North Korea's regime and society.⁹ William Steuck emphasizes the international character of the Korean War and claimed that the Korean War would have been the Third World War. Stueck defines the Korean

⁷ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 1: Liberation and the emergence of separate regimes, 1945-1947* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 2: The roaring of the cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990)

⁸ Allan R. Millett, *The War For Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning; A War For Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from North* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010)

⁹ Andrei Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea, 1945-1960* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002)

War as an internationalized Civil War. According to him, the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China were very important factors to the start and conduct of the war.¹⁰

Complicating the debate, Kathryn Weathersby of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars discovers many Russian documents, including telegrams and conversation between Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung. Based on these documents, Weathersby premise that the Korean War was planned by Stalin and Kim Il Sung and started by Kim Il Sung with Stalin's permission. She discovers Kim Il Sung's collaboration in starting the war. According to her documents, decision making for the start of the Korean War was a continuous interaction and conversation between Stalin and Kim Il Sung, not a one-sided order from the Kremlin.¹¹

From this enlarged debate, some Korean scholars engaged in the studies of the Korean War. Park Myong Lim publishes his two volumes of books in Korean, using some North Korean documents in National Archives in Maryland. His view was a counter-argument against Cumings' thesis and set his stance between the traditional perspective and the revisionists' view.¹² Another Korean scholar, Kim Young Ho, suggests his thesis of Stalin's rollback strategy, which was new at that time. His view is mainly the counter-argument against the revisionists'

¹⁰ William Stueck, *The Korean War; Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002)

¹¹ Kathryn Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence From Russian Archives," *Cold War International History Project working paper* 8 (1993); "To Attack or Not Attack? : Stalin, Kim Il Sung, and Prelude to War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5(1995); "New Evidence on the Korean War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (1995): 36; "New Evidence on the Korean War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 11 (1998): 176-199.; "Should We Fear This?: Stalin and the Danger of War with America." *Cold War International History Project working paper* 39 (2002); "New Evidence on North Korea." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 14/15 (2003): 5-138.

¹² 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1: 결정과 반발* (서울: 나남출판, 1996); *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2: 기원과 원인* (서울: 나남출판, 1996)

view and he also refutes the Wedge theory about the US-China relations regarding Stalin's objective to manipulate through the Korean War. Because his book does not include recent declassified Chinese language sources and recent Chinese scholars' view regarding the complex relations between Soviet and China, he simplifies the relations between the Soviet and China as an alliance against the US after the two countries' treaty of January 1950.¹³

One of the interesting questions elicited from these sources was that of why Stalin finally approved Kim's invasion plan in January 1950 and shifted his attitude toward the war. The only clue to the reason for his major policy shift in Korea was a telegram from May 14, 1950, which simply stated that "in light of the altered international situation, we agree with the proposal of the Koreans to move towards reunification."¹⁴ As scholars lacked information, the common answer regarding why Stalin sent this change in policy had been "the altered international situation." Traditional answers to the question of why Stalin shifted his policy towards the invasion plan of Kim Il Sung in the early 1950's were as follows: the victory of the Communist Party in China, the development of Soviet nuclear capabilities, a judgment that the US would not intervene in Korea, and a desire to offset the US presence in Japan with a Communist controlled Korea. The books based on declassified Chinese language sources provided more complex pictures of Stalin's calculation. According to Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai, Stalin could drive a wedge between China and the US, thus preventing any possible trend toward "Titoism" in Mao, and this was one of the major reasons for Stalin's consent to Kim Il Sung's venture. The Soviet Union desired to create a greater security buffer zone and to use the

¹³ 김영호, *한국전쟁의 기원과 전개과정* (서울: 성신여자대학교 출판부, 2006)

¹⁴ Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li, *After Leaning to One Side: China and Its Allies in the Cold War* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011), 20.; Ciphred telegram from Stalin to Mao Zedong, May 14, 1950, in APRF, f. 45, op.1, d. 331, l. 554.

peninsula as the springboard for future operations against Japan.¹⁵ The Chinese scholar Shen Zhihua continues this thesis with new Chinese language sources. Zhihua argues that the new Sino-Soviet Treaty made Stalin reconsider his overall Far East policy and forced him to seek new means of maintaining Soviet interests in the area. According to Zhihua, because Stalin wanted both to unify the Korean peninsula and to keep China under Soviet influence, the Korean operation seemed a perfect means of achieving both ends. The outbreak of the Korean War would prevent China from attacking Taiwan and it would place China's military at the service of Soviet strategy. Zhihua concludes that the shift in Stalin's Korea policy was intimately connected with evolving Sino-Soviet relations. Adding to this point, Shen and Li demonstrate that the new geostrategic landscape of Northeast Asia produced by the Mao-Stalin negotiations in the early months of 1950 would be the direct answer to why Stalin changed his strategy.¹⁶

Before the end of the Cold War, many studies had depicted Mao as a passive actor or odd man out regarding the Korean War. This depiction was partly right because Mao's top priority was not unification of Korea but unification of China. However, recent studies of new Chinese sources show diverse factors involved in the Chinese decision. Chen Jian argues that China did not enter passively by Stalin's pressure but entered with active attitude and motivation based on Mao's own strategic calculation. Jian emphasizes an active role of Mao in the Korean War.¹⁷ Richard C. Thornton argues that Stalin's strategy of employing Korea as a scapegoat to

¹⁵ Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partner: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 203-225.

¹⁶ Shen Zhihua, translated by Neil Silver, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 114-125.; Zhihua, Shen, "Sino-Soviet Relations and the Origins of the Korean War: Stalin's Strategic Goals in the Far East," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2, no.2, Spring (2000), 44-68.

¹⁷ Chen, Jian, *China's road to the Korean War: the making of the Sino-American confrontation*. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994), 10.

pit China against the United States required that North Korea fail in its attempt to defeat the South. Thornton continued claiming that, for Stalin, support for war in Korea was designed to preempt Mao's strategy of conquering Taiwan and establishing relations with the United States. Stalin's objective to employ conflict in Korea was to maneuver China into confrontation with the United States, and thus subordinate Mao to Soviet strategy.¹⁸ Another Chinese scholar Shu Guang Zhang demonstrates that Mao's military romanticism affected his decision to enter the Korean War.¹⁹ Mao's generals remember the diverse pictures of the Chinese elite's decision making process towards the Korean War.²⁰

Stalin's Unspoken Strategy for the War: Maximum Gain / Low Risk Strategy

Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung were allies under communism but they had very different strategic interests towards the Korean War. Lewis well explains the psychological situation of Russian people after the end of the Second World War. Military historian Adrian Lewis argues that the enormous pain and suffering, including loss of 25 to 30 million family members, traumatized the Russian people, influencing their thinking and decision-making process for generations. Russian people abnormally needed security guarantees and buffer zones to protect their home front from foreign invasions. Russian people needed large armies, trained strategic reserve, well-equipped forces, nuclear weapons and industry to continue a wartime production

¹⁸ Richard C. Thornton, *Odd Man Out: Truman, Stalin, Mao and the Origins of the Korean War* (Washington D.C.: Brassey's, 2000), 2-4.

¹⁹ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995)

²⁰ Xiaobing Li, Allan R Millett and Bin Yu, eds. *Mao's Generals Remember Korea* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2001)

schedule.²¹ Russian military historian David R. Stone explains that for every American or British soldier who perished, twenty Soviet soldiers died because the US and the UK each had 400,000 servicemen and women killed while 25-30 million Soviet citizens died during the Second World War. Stone also explains that one thousand Soviets died every hour of every day of every month of every year from June 1941 to May 1945.²² Arguably, all Russian families suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after the War. Because of these extremely huge casualties, the Soviet Union had not recovered their shock from Germany's surprise attack, and the Soviet Union wanted to concentrate national recovery economically and psychologically and made large security buffer zones to protect future threats, including Germany, Japan, Great Britain and the United States. Stalin's concern was not fantasy because Winston Churchill and the British Joint Planning Staff formed Operation Unthinkable to invade the Soviet Union with the US, Germany and Polish forces after the Nazi's defeat if the Soviet Union advanced toward all Europe beyond Germany. The opposite side concerned the Soviet Union's expansionism and aggressive advancement after the collapse of Germany and Japan. The US secretly built an atomic bomb without a notice to the Soviet Union while Winston Churchill planned secretly Operation Unthinkable.

As Stalin watched U.S. activities to rebuild Europe, including Germany with the Marshall Plan, his concerns about another war in Europe increased significantly. Stalin and the Russian people needed buffer zones to guarantee their security from the future threats of the US, Germany and Japan. Nationalism and realpolitik were more important than an ideal

²¹ Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military History from the Second World War to Operation Enduring Freedom*, 2nd (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 69-70.

²² David R. Stone, eds. *The Soviet Union at War, 1941-1945* (New York, NY: Pen & Sword Books, 2010), 2-3.

revolutionary brotherhood. Stalin's historical role was the counter-revolution over Trotsky before the war. After the Second World War, the Soviet Union's top priority was to rebuild the national economy rather than starting another war.²³ In the foreign policy realm, Stalin was very careful when he made a decision if the price was too high. One Tsarist tradition was expansionism and the Soviet Union needed security buffer zones but Stalin was not an adventurer but a cold and calculating person on foreign policy realm.²⁴

Harrison E. Salisbury, the author of *War between Russia and China*, argues that Stalin was not a gambler but a cautious man. Salisbury points out that from 1945 to 1950, Stalin had tested the US in diverse areas of the world but never without important motivation. According to Salisbury, because Stalin never played power politics in a random fashion, Stalin's decision regarding the Korean War was only within the framework of a calculated means to an end.²⁵

In particular, Stalin in 1950 was an old and wise man who already spent the time to manage the Soviet Empire for more than 25 years. Stalin had a stroke in 1945 and suffered from illness since 1945. Stalin of 1950 was neither a revolutionary romanticist nor a risk taker, but a

²³ Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953* (London: Yale University Press, 2006), 24-25.

²⁴ Professor of Russian history Eve Levin explains to me about complexity of tsarist expansionism. The situation regarding tsarist expansionism was actually more complex. While the Russian government took advantage during the 17th century because Russian fur traders probed further and further into Siberia and there was absence of any other strong power to claim the territory, expansion of the 18th century was the result of government policy and deliberate. During the 19th century, military commanders at the periphery took the lead in Central Asia while Russian actively pursued the conquest of the Caucasus. Military commanders advanced further and sought approval from the government in St. Petersburg after the facts in order to secure current Russian holdings. Russians did not expand in the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire because they were averse to destabilizing the balance of power by doing so. Eve Levin, e-mail message to the author, April 26, 2014.

²⁵ Harrison E. Salisbury, *War between Russia and China* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1969), 93.

rational calculator who had many experiences about military, diplomatic, economic and political affairs. Mao and Kim Il Sung were relatively more young, ambitious and revolutionary romanticist than Stalin in 1950. Stalin's vision on foreign policy before the Second World War was repeated after the War. Erik Van Rhee explains that Stalin was not prepared for adventures when the price was too high. The Soviet Union was devastated by the war and needed to reconstruct the country. Van Rhee points out that to pursue war would sheer madness.²⁶

The Soviet Union was historically very weak in the Far East region. Without Land Lease program of the US, the Soviet Army could not conduct their military operation in Asia. More than 50% of logistics and supplies for the Soviet Army during the Second World War were from the US across the Pacific Sea. Because of Non-Aggression Agreement between the Soviet Union and Japan, Japan did not disturb the supply route from the US to the Soviet Union via the Pacific Sea. Because Stalin expected a crisis in Europe from 1939, Stalin signed the Non-Aggression Agreement with Japan. The Soviet Union and Japan did not two frontlines during the coming war. Therefore, Stalin knew that the Soviet Army would not win the war against the US in Asia without Land Lease support. Stalin knew that the US largely demobilized its army and the US army was very weak in 1950. Stalin also knew that the Soviet Army was generally much stronger than the US Army in a land warfare because he stopped the postwar demobilization of the Soviet armed forces. By the late 1940s, the Soviet Army numbered around 3 million down from the 11 million of 1945 and 175 divisions down from 500 divisions of 1945. The Soviet Army doubled in size between 1948 and 1955.²⁷ Nonetheless, Stalin knew that the Soviet Army would not win the war in the Korean peninsula because of the US naval supremacy and air

²⁶ Erik Van Ree, *Socialism in One Zone: Stalin's policy in Korea, 1945-1947* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 4-5.

²⁷ Roberts, *Stalin's Wars*, 361.

power surrounding the peninsula. Stalin had a confidence to win a war against the US in Europe because he knew that the Soviet ground forces were much stronger than the US and the West. However, the Far East region was not the place for the Soviet Army's victory. Stalin also hesitated to move the Soviet Air Forces from Shanghai against Formosa to Manchuria area because China was more concern to Stalin than Korea.

Stalin also concerned about the rise of China's power in that region. Mongolia and Korea was under the Soviet Union's influence before the Korean War. Mao won the civil war not because of Stalin in spite of Stalin. Stalin had a reliable man, Kao Kang, in Manchuria to replace Mao. Because Kao Kang was an independent and autonomous principal in Manchuria, Mao feared Kao Kang's connection to the Kremlin. Two years after Stalin died in 1950, Kao Kang committed suicide²⁸. At that time, Beijing strongly blamed Kao Kang and other pro-Soviet Chinese politicians as the Soviet spies. In this rivalry situation between the Soviet Union and China in 1949 and 1950, the Kremlin calculated benefits and risks from the Korean War with a possibility of the US intervention. During the war, Stalin never replied to the letter of Beijing about the early Chinese intervention about 320,000 Chinese Voluntary Forces (CVF) in early July which would guarantee the quick victory of the war because the Chinese intervention would block the sufficient time for the US forces to build the defensive line along the Pusan Perimeter.²⁹ Instead, Stalin asked the Chinese intervention in October when the US forces almost

²⁸ Harrison E. Salisbury, *War between Russia and China*, 93-98.

²⁹ Chinese scholar Shen Zhi-hua found the Chinese sources about the PRC leadership's eagerness to intervene in early July but Stalin refrained to return the necessary approval to China. See Shen Zhi-hua, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War," in *The Korean War at Sixty: New Approaches to the Study of the Korean War*, eds. Steven Casey (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 53-54.; Zhihua Shen, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no.2 (2010): 215-216.

reached the border between China and Korea. It was too late because the KPA was almost destroyed. Stalin also delayed to provide the air support to China which he promised.

In Stalin's global strategy, the Korean conflict was not only a useful litmus test to the Americans' intention- namely, their willingness to protect their allies for future conflicts but also an opportunity to get the US and China involved in a significant war that consumed the attention and energy of both states. This was a gamble but the costs were very cheap. No Russian blood would be split. China and North Korea would pay the blood toll. Stalin did not seriously care about the life of North Korean people and did not see Kim Il Sung as a serious and equal partner; indeed, he had been merely a Soviet junior officer, a captain, just some months before. Stalin's strategy towards the Korean War was a lower risk and maximum gain strategy.

I examine Stalin's vision of war in Korea in three stages. Firstly, Stalin had maintained his skeptical view on Kim Il Sung's invasion plan until January of 1950. Secondly, Stalin suddenly changed his view at the time of the Soviet-Sino treaty in January of 1950. Until the US intervention in the early stage of war from January 1950, Stalin had maintained his position to support Kim's vision of war, which achieved a quick victory by massive uprising of the Korean communists in South Korea. However, thirdly, after the US intervention, Stalin started to use this war for his own interests by shedding the blood of the KPA and the PLA.

Stalin skillfully manipulated the Korean War for his interest since the beginning of the war. When Kim Il Sung stayed in Seoul for three days after the surprising US intervention, for first two days, Stalin never advised Kim Il Sung that the KPA had to advance as soon as possible before the US forces' arrival in Pusan. Stalin and Soviet advisors knew how to win the war at the early stage of the war and that the KPA must advance as soon as possible without staying in

Seoul for three days. Instead, for the third day that the KPA had stayed in Seoul, Stalin advised Kim forward to the South without considering enough reserve forces and logistics. If this army was Russian forces, Stalin must have pushed and ordered to his front commanders to advance every hour or even every minute. Because of the KPA's three days in Seoul, the US Army had a sufficient time to arrive in Pusan.

More importantly, Stalin manipulated the timing of the Chinese intervention. Stalin never replied to the Beijing's letter that the 320,000 Chinese forces were ready to intervene for a victory in early July.³⁰ This does not make sense militarily. If Stalin allowed the early Chinese intervention in early July, South Korea would have not existed today. Stalin might have feared Chinese influence over the Korean peninsula at that time by intervention of large Chinese forces. However, Stalin allowed the Chinese intervention much later in October. Actually, Stalin strongly asked Mao of Chinese intervention when the US forces almost reached the Yalu River. Mao hesitated but finally decided to intervene the war.

During the war, Stalin and Soviet advisors never advised and continually kept silence when Kim Il Sung did a crucial mistake regarding the use of forces. For instance, Kim Il Sung divided the KPA into two lines when the KPA advanced towards Pusan. More specifically, Kim Il Sung ordered the KPA 6th Division, the strongest unit and consisted of most veterans of the Chinese Civil War, to advance a support line towards Jolla province where no enemies existed. This was militarily a huge mistake and exactly opposite to Soviet operational doctrine. Kim Il Sung was an inexperienced young leader. He considered his political consideration because the KPA 6th Division was Kim Il Sung's potential rival group, pro-Chinese veterans. Nonetheless,

³⁰ *Ibid*, 53-57.

hundreds of Soviet advisors, including many generals, veterans of the Soviet-German War and located next to Kim Il Sung, continually kept silence regarding this crucial mistake. These much experienced Soviet advisors clearly knew how to lose the war. Because of this operational mistake, the US forces and the ROK Army could have a sufficient time to build a strong defensive line.

Stalin watched the US air power during the war because hundreds of Soviet military pilots fought against the Americans near the border between China and Korea.³¹ Stalin developed the Soviet aircraft industry, including radar and air defense during 1951-1953. However, the Soviet air power was still weaker than the US air power and the Soviet Union did not have means to deliver their very few atomic bombs to the US.³² The Korean War was a good case study for the Soviet Union to check the US air power and military capability.

Throughout the armistice talks, Stalin wanted to delay the war as long as possible to hold the US forces in peninsula even though Kim Il Sung wanted to stop the war as soon as possible because of the effective US strategic bombing campaign on industrial and population complex. Throughout the war, Stalin had only considered his national interest not his junior partner's positions, Chinese and North Koreans. Stalin lured the enemy into a dangerous position and kept

³¹ Research about the Soviet air forces during the Korean War as follows: 전현수, “소련 공군의 한국전 참전.” eds. *한국 전쟁사의 새로운 연구 1* (Seoul: 군사편찬연구소, 2001), 625-672.; 신범식, “소련의 북한군사지원.” eds. *Ibid*, 557-624.; Shen Zhi-hua, “China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War,” 53-54.; Zhihua Shen, “China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force,” 215-216.

³² Valdislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 81.

them as long as he could. The price of a delayed war was Chinese, American, North and South Korean casualties, not Russian casualties.

Stalin was neither a risk-taker nor Trotsky, an idealist, who supported the Third World revolutions. From this war, Stalin wanted to delay the Third World War in Europe, his greatest sphere of interest, as long as possible by holding the US in the distant Korean peninsula, and to achieve a sufficient time to recover its national economy from a devastation of the Second World War. Stalin was not Trotsky-like ideal communist, who supported International Comintern and permanent revolution, but a Machiavelli realist, who believed national interest as a top priority in a real-politic world. From this war, Stalin achieved a great security buffer zone for Russia Far Eastern area with very cheap costs, spent by his junior partners, China and North Korea. Many factors influenced the end of armistice talks, such as the Eisenhower's administration's Massive Retaliation doctrine and warning of the use of atomic bombs regarding the armistice talk. With these diverse factors, the Korean War finally stopped when Stalin died in 1953.

The Sino-Soviet Treaty and Stalin's Global Security Strategy

Stalin saw the Korean issue as a part of his global strategy. In terms of the geography of Korea, the Korean issue was difficult to separate from the issues of China and Japan. In contrast to the common understanding, the relationship between Stalin and Mao was not simple. They maintained a troubled partnership which played the origins of the Soviet-Sino split several years later after Stalin's death. During the Russian Civil War, Mao was reluctant to help the Red Army and Stalin negotiated with Mao's enemy, the Chinese Nationalists, during the Chinese Civil War.

For a bigger picture, the Soviet Union and China were allies as communist regimes, but their interest and strategy were difference. They certainly had ideological commonalities, especially in the 1940's and early 1950's, but also significant ideological differences. Although the split between the Soviet Union and China was ultimately justified by ideological explanations, rather than practical conflicts of interests, their interests often were clashed and in conflict.

For instance, Stalin's greatest night-mare was making Mao's relationship with Western countries better, including the US. Shen and Li show that relationship between Stalin and Mao was not smooth from the beginning stage because of different interests. Their complicated partnership began when Mao won the civil war:

The crux of the North China question was the control over the Chinese Changchun Railroad, about which Stalin had the greatest concern. If an ice-free port to the Pacific Ocean was the core of the Soviet Far Eastern strategy, the Chinese Changchun Railroad was the lifeline of this strategy. Stalin was extremely worried that Mao would deny the validity of the 1945 railroad agreement...On Mao's arrive in Moscow on December 16, 1949, Mao immediately held official talks with Stalin. In their first round of conversations, however, the two leaders became deadlocked on how to handle the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1945...Stalin expressed willingness to find a feasible way to revise certain features of the treaty while retaining the treaty itself. Stalin's interception certainly clarified the Soviet stance, which was negative about a new treaty³³.

Naturally, Stalin was concerned about his interests while Mao was concerned about his interests. To set up the new political geography of North East Asia, their negotiation was really important. And this was strongly relevant to Stalin's thinking about the Korean issue. Stalin, had to make Mao as his best partner, not America's partner, to satisfy the Soviet Union's long-term goals. Shen and Li explain that:

The atmosphere in Moscow was now heavy and tense: Stalin was waiting for Mao to change his stance, while Mao was trying to force Stalin to make concessions...The main motivation for Stalin to concede on this issue was

³³ Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li, *After Learning to One Side*, 6.

perhaps the dawning of the Cold War. Against this background, China's joining the socialist camp was vital to Soviet security in the Far East and to its strategic interests in Asia. Mao's attitude and behavior were undoubtedly aggravating Stalin's anxiety...Mao deliberately revealed that China was going to hold negotiation with Burma and India for establishing diplomatic relations, and that Britain and other member states of the British Commonwealth would soon take substantial steps towards recognition of the People's Republic of China. Clearly, Mao was diplomatically expressing his discontent with Stalin and exerting pressure on Moscow amid rumors that he had been put under house arrest and that relations between the two countries were strained. Stalin was profoundly disturbed by China's improving relations with other states, especially Western ones, at a time then Sino-Soviet negotiations were deadlocked. He feared that such a trend would lead to a Sino-American rapprochement. In anticipating possible changes in the international situation, and worrying about the threat of a warmer Chinese-Western relationship, Stalin could not afford to let Mao return home empty-handed.³⁴

Stalin allowed Kim's invasion plan on 30 January 1950 when he was in struggle with a new agreement draft with China. After Stalin's decision to concede early January, Zhou came to Moscow on 20 January and he and Mao had a talk with Stalin on 23 January. On 26 January China made a draft which asked the Soviet Union completely to withdraw from Lushun, Dalian and the Chuangchun Railroad three years after the peace treaty with Japan. Stalin was surprised that China not only asked Soviet troops to withdraw from Lushun but also to give up the Soviet Union's privileged positions in Northeastern China. The Soviet Union revised this Chinese draft on 28 January, and China revised again it from 31 January to 2 February.³⁵ Between them, Stalin sent his permission that he was ready to help Kim Il Sung's invasion plan.³⁶ Before this, Stalin many times rejected Kim Il Sung's plan because of fear of a US intervention and North Korea's unpreparedness for a war. Stalin did not mention why he was changed his thinking on his correspondence. Before this, Stalin and Soviet elites worried about Kim's unprepared attack on

³⁴ *Ibid*, 6-7.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 8-12.

³⁶ "To Attack or Not Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung, and Prelude to War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5(1995): 9. Ciphared telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 January 1950.

the South which could have led to a bigger crisis against the US. At the end of January, Stalin's top concern was the new agreement draft with China because it was time to hand over the draft for a give-and-take negotiation time. To Stalin, this time was to set up a new political geography of North East Asia via a new agreement with China. Two days after Stalin's surprise at the Chinese bold draft, Stalin sent his permission to Kim Il Sung without stating the reason why he changed his mind. From February 11 to 13, China was surprised that Stalin asked China that no foreigners and their capital would be permitted to become involved in business activities or enterprise directly or indirectly in the Far East region, Central Asia, Manchuria and Xinjiang in order to prevent American influence in the event of a Soviet withdrawal. After all, on 14 February the Soviet Union and China officially signed a new agreement and Stalin made a concession to give up the Soviet Union's previous rights to Lushun, Dalian and Chuangchun Railroad. Because the Soviet Union had Mongolia as an important partner in North East Asia and had to consider global Cold War geography, Stalin made a concession. Stalin seriously thought of the American approach to China. Shen and Li show that:

During Mao's visit to Moscow, the Soviet Embassy in China continued to send back reports on American efforts to sow dissension between China and the Soviet Union. According to one dated January 17, 1950, allegedly based on reliable information, American imperialism now attaches great importance to Sino-Soviet relations in its China policy. America pins its hopes on the possibility that after its recognition of the people's government it will be able to make China dependent on it economically by means of trade, after which political influence will be imposed on it. America is afraid of China's joining the camp headed by the Soviet Union. Especially, the Americans were now taking advantage of the opportunity presented by British recognition of China to probe the prospect of developing trade relations with the PRC and to get intelligence information through the British. They hoped that trade relations will serve as a bridge to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Chinese people's government³⁷.

³⁷ Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li, *After Learning to One Side*, 14.

During the period of negotiation with China, Stalin redesigned his strategic objective in North East Asia in Cold War geography. Korea was a good chess piece for his new game. Stalin asked Kim Il Sung to get the Chinese to promise to help him should the US intervene. If Kim Il Sung won the war, Stalin would get the ice free port and railway to the Pacific Ocean in Korea. If Kim Il Sung lost the war, Mao would ask Stalin for the Soviet forces coming back to Manchuria to defend against a possible US and Japanese attack.³⁸ Without the Soviet direct deployment, Stalin would get the benefit of a war possibly between China and the US. Stalin also might have considered that the Korean War would exhaust Mao's time and energy and forestall a Chinese invasion of Taiwan where Stalin promised to support the Soviet air forces against possible US intervention. To Stalin, the Korean War was a cheap gamble without Russian human costs and it could prevent permanently Stalin's night-mare, a Sino-America new relationship, and a Third World War in the European theater and Taiwan. This Mao's trip in Moscow was a significant event to change Stalin's geostrategic thinking towards North East Asia.

Military Question: Did Stalin disturb a quick victory of the KPA?

In the military realm, Thorton introduces a very interesting and important speculation. He argues that the Soviet war plan for Pyongyang, the conduct of the war, the kind of weapons supplied and withheld, and the timing of supply show rather clearly Stalin's intent to prevent the North from winning. According to him, Stalin and the Soviet advisors, who were experienced Second World War veterans, did nothing to offset KPA vulnerabilities: no air support, no air

³⁸ *Ibid*, 20-23.

defense, no sea support, no modern weapons and no bridging equipment. He argued that Stalin refused to offer any assistance to KPA and demanded Mao's intervention even before MacArthur moved north of the 38th parallel. He asserted that Stalin urged Kim to concentrate all of his forces against the Pusan perimeter and to ignore defense against the high probability of an American counterstrike in the rear.³⁹

It is true that the KPA was a good army in terms of military capability. The KPA was created successfully for a short period, five years, through Soviet guidance and support. The KPA's initial operation was very successful. However, this army followed the flawed plan and conducted the battle with the wrong strategy. The Soviet war planner designed the plan with the most desired assumptions: non US intervention and a rapid collapse of the South Korean government. These planners were very professional and very well knew that the war plan should be made based on the worst scenario not the best scenario. However, they made the obvious flawed plan based on the best possible scenario. Why did they do this in that way? Is it because they had an optimistic scenario just like the young, passionate Kim Il Sung? This plan was based not on their professionalism and work ethics but on an immature amateur optimism. The plan of attack was only designed by the Soviet advisors and it was translated by the KPA officers.⁴⁰ Frequently in history, wars are won when the forces take the capital. The Soviet advisors and Kim Il Sung designed and built the KPA to defeat the unimpressive ROKA. It did have modern, offensive tanks and artillery, and it won early victories. The US could not stop it initially. But, Stalin withheld critical equipment, such as river-crossing equipment.

³⁹ Thornton, *Odd Man Out*, 4.

⁴⁰ Former KPA officer Ju Young Bok remembers that he translated the Russian language invasion plan and it was made by the Soviet advisors from his memoir. See 주영복, 내가 겪은 조선전쟁 1 (서울, 고려원, 1990), 240.

The Soviet advisors did not allow the Chinese Civil War Korean veterans KPA officers into the secret situation room while they made the plan⁴¹ and the Soviet Union kept the timing and the process of the invasion plan from China until the beginning of the war. Mao was informed of the beginning of the war by reading a newspaper. Kim Il Sung believed Park Hun Young's big talk and the non-US intervention. However, this amateur plan did not make sense to the professional military officers who had extensive battle experiences. According to Yu, Stalin sent a new advisory team to Pyongyang in May specifically to create a new war plan under the pseudonymous Lieutenant General Alexandre P. Vasiliev, replacing the military advisors who had been dispatched to North Korea with individuals with extensive combat experience. Those Soviet advisors had horrific and unforgettable battle experiences from the Second World War, and the Soviet operation generally and historically did not take many much risks before the start of the attack. Jang Jun Ik, the retired Lieutenant General of the ROK Army who studied the KPA, estimated that the plan, which only had an initial operation for the occupation of Seoul, was complete and utter nonsense in terms of a military perspective. That was why Jang speculated that the Soviet advisors might have had the second and the third stage of a war plan for southward advancement.⁴² However, the KPA tanks did not cross the Han from Seoul in force until July 3, the eighth day of the war. Thornton demonstrates that:

The KPA was delayed by the discussion over whether or not to proceed to south, by the need to await supplies, and by the need to repair bombed out and blown bridges.⁴³ Moreover, having crossed the Han River and having become committed to a southward drive, the KPA exhibited little inclination to move quickly. It must be kept in mind that for North Korea to succeed, speed was of the essence to prevent an American lodgment. Reporter Marguerite Higgins said

⁴¹ Former KPA officer Yu Song Chul remembers that no Korean-Chinese veteran officers, who fought during the Chinese Civil War, were allowed to enter the secret situation room and to read the invasion plan.

⁴² 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 166-170.

⁴³ Thornton, *Odd Man Out*, 233.

that “Why they did not push their tanks straight through to Pusan then and there is one of the war’s mysteries.” When the KPA forces reached the Pusan perimeter, they were already perilously low on food, fuel, ammunition, weapons, and even trained men.⁴⁴

Were these only repeated mistakes of the Soviet war planners, who were professional veterans? Was it possible that the planners thought this war was similar to the recent war fought by Russian people against Nazi Germany? However, we must ask when it became apparent that the US was going to intervene. Speed was only necessary if the US came to South Korea.

According to Thorton’s thesis, the KPA was another victim of the war, who believed its optimism and passion, but it was actually used and abandoned by their ally Stalin. Soldiers of the KPA were killed and wounded based on the wrong strategy. To Stalin, the KPA was a cheap product to maximize his bigger strategic interest: the US-China conflict and the delay of the decisive war between the Soviet Union and the US in Europe. While Stalin gave up his claim to Manchuria at the meeting with Mao in January 1950 in Moscow, Stalin decided to send a positive answer to Kim Il Sung about the invasion plan. Because the Soviet Union already had a large strategic reserve area in Manchuria, this might have been a large buffer zone against possible US and Japanese threats near. If the US and China became enemies, Manchuria would be a great buffer zone to the security of the Soviet Union and it would be defended by PLA. Stalin did not want to provide direct air support for the Chinese invasion of Taiwan (which might lead to the Third World War against the US) despite Mao’s continuous asking. Arguably, Stalin wanted to achieve his two strategic objectives from the Korean War, the US-China conflict which would preclude war in Europe and the delay of the Chinese invasion of Taiwan which would preclude direct confrontation with the US. His gamble was cheap without any sacrifice of

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 236-239.; Marguerite Higgins, *War in Korea: The Report of a Woman Combat Correspondent* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1951), 71.

the Russian people. Stalin could have got a bonus, a small buffer zone and seasonably warmer ports if Kim won the war. If Kim lost the war, the cost would go to his junior partner, Mao and Kim. Arguably, Stalin set the stage for a US-China War on the Korean peninsula. Throughout the three year war, Stalin continuously maintained his same attitude toward the Korean War. Stalin wanted to maintain his main enemy, the US, in a conflict zone for as long as possible.

Operationally, the KPA's operation did not look like the Soviet way of war, Deep Operation. One tank brigade did not do anything for conducting the Deep Operation. The First echelon should be organized to conduct the Soviet way of war. The Soviet General Staff organized the civilian economy and defense industry as a part of its job in order to support the Front's conducting operation. The General Staff and GOSPLAN should manage all national resources to support the armed force's operation, including logistics, supply, manpower, and transportation. The KPA did not have any reserve forces and did not manage all national sources to support its operation. The Soviet way of war was a penetration of the mobile forces by using first, second and third echelon. They did not stop and they destroyed the enemy's armed forces. Their objective was not capturing territory but destroying enemy's forces⁴⁵. The argument that KPA did have only one tank brigade because of bad road conditions and mountain terrains of Korea make sense militarily, but the Soviet conducted Deep Battle operations even in much more mountainous areas of Manchuria successfully. The KPA did not have enough mobile forces to conduct Deep Operation. The War was people's war and Kim's political gamble. Stalin

⁴⁵ Many books of David M Glantz well explain the Soviet way of war and the Soviet Deep Operation. See David M. Glantz, *The Soviet conduct of war* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Soviet Army Studies Office, 1987); *The Soviet conduct of tactical maneuver: spearhead of the offensive* (London, Frank Cass, 1991); *Soviet military operational art: in pursuit of deep battle* (London: Frank Cass, 1991)

avoided a direct responsibility and directed Mao to take a responsibility of Asian communists' conflict.

The answer to how the KPA was operationally successful in the initial period of the Korean is not only from the Soviet support, including weapons, ammunition, equipment, tanks and Soviet advisors but also from the human sources of the KPA from China. The Korean veterans returned from China to North Korea should have had valuable battle experiences and know combined operations from their harsh experiences in more than 30 years.⁴⁶ Who they were and where they were from are the key issues to answer the initial success of the KPA. The KPA was not a pawn of the Soviet Union. The KPA conducted very well against the Smith unit not by tank attack but by combined armed operation. Its ability should be evaluated not by its short training period or teachings but by harsh battle experience. In particular, regiment-division level operations should be conducted by long time, experienced and educated commanders and staff because they should know command and control system, fire support, aviation, logistics, supply,

⁴⁶ Several books well researched the Korean veterans of the Chinese Civil War who became the soldiers of the KPA. The main body of them were former the Korean Volunteer Army (KVA). Some of their commanders individually came back to North Korea being a political and military leader of the DPRK and others came back with their soldiers after the victory of CCP in 1949 and 1950. See 염인호, *조선의용군의 독립운동* (서울: 나남출판, 2001); “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로.” eds. *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 2* (서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2002), 133-190.; *조선의용대와 조선의용군* (서울: 한국 독립운동사 편찬위원회 독립기념관 한국독립운동사연구소, 2009); 또 하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁 (서울: 역사비평사, 2010); 백학순, “중국내전시 북한의 중국공산당을 위한 군사원조: 북한군 파병 및 후방기지 제공.” *한국과 국제정치* 10, no. 1 (1994):263-281.; 이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장.” *國際政治論叢* 45, no. 3 (2005): 171-193.; 정병일, “북중 관계에 미친 연안파의 위상 재조명: 정치 군사적 평가를 중심으로.” *社會科學研究* 18, no. 2 (2010): 282-387.; “북한국가건설에 미친 연안파의 역할.” *한국정치학회보* 46, no. 5 (2012): 145-167.; 장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰.” *정신문화연구* 36, no. 1 (2013): 156-182.

and combined arms operation. The KPA fought against the Smith unit should know combined armed operation.

A Chinese scholar made the most important discovery to support Stalin's reluctant support for Kim's early victory. Shen Zhi-hua finds Chinese sources that at the initial stage of the war, Stalin did not allow the early Chinese intervention. Mao wanted to intervene the war with 320,000 soldiers before the US advances, and Kim Il Sung wanted the Chinese help as soon as possible because the continuous US strategic bombing in the North. Nonetheless, Stalin did not reply the request from Mao and Kim on early July. Shen Zhi-hua argues that:

China was already making its own active preparations. While Chinese troops were being deployed to the northeast on a large scale, Chinese leaders were speeding up their Korean battle planning. On 12/13 July, Zhou told Kim that China would not tolerate the US intervention in Korea, and that the Chinese government was ready to provide, to the best of its ability, all assistance needed by North Korea in the war. Meanwhile, China requested that the North Koreans 'provide 500 each of Korean maps with the scales of 1:100,000; 1:200,000 and 1,500,000 ... and send over samples of the KPA uniforms as soon as possible'. Kim immediately informed the Soviet ambassador of these requests, asserting: 'now that countries like the United States have already entered the war on Syngman Rhee's side, democratic countries like Czechoslovakia and China could also use their own armies to assist North Korea'. But Shtykov deliberately avoided proffering a response... Mao ended by stating that if North Korea needed a help, China 'could send her own army to Korea. For this purpose, the Chinese side had already mustered four armies totaling 320,000 men'. Kim was keen to discover Moscow's reaction. But though Shtykov duly asked Moscow for its opinion on the question of China sending troops, Stalin never replied.⁴⁷

Many historians believed that Mao decided to intervene when the US forces came across the 38th parallel. They also believed that the China would not have intervened in the war if the Truman administration did not decide to send the US forces across the 38th parallel. However,

⁴⁷Shen Zhi-hua, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War," 53-54.; Zhijia Shen, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force," 215-216.

the opposite is true according to Shen. Shen shows that Mao wanted to intervene much earlier and he had eagerness to send his troops to aid Korea. Stalin might have considered the Third World War against the US, and the Chinese stronger influence over the peninsula, which he wanted to maintain his interest after a return of Manchuria's benefits to China. If Mao's troop intervened in early July with Stalin's allowance, the situation of the war would have completely been different. When Mao's troops crossed over Yalu river, the North Korean People's Army was almost destroyed and the US and ROK army almost reached Yalu river. Stalin as a final decision maker designed the timing of Chinese intervention and the direction of the North Korean People's Army. Even Stalin advised Kim Il Sung to flee from North Korea because the war was almost over when the US and ROK army reached near Yalu river. Some of Kim's family went to Manchuria; Kim Il Sung was in a panic when his request for international assistance was rejected by Stalin and Kim was advised to giving up his revolutionary war.

Stalin: "Lure the enemy into a small peninsula as long as possible,

Maximize the time to recover our economy by junior partner's sacrifice"

Stalin said his unspoken strategy to CSSR leader Llement Gottwald, 27 August 1950:

We left the Security Council for four reasons: first, to demonstrate solidarity of the Soviet Union with the new China. Second, to underscore the foolishness and idiocy of the United States policy of recognizing the Guomindang puppet in the Security Council as the representative of China and not wanting to admit the genuine representative of China to the Security Council; third, to render decisions of the Security Council illegitimate by virtue of the absence of representatives of two great powers; fourth, to give the American government a free hand and give it an opportunity to commit more foolishness using a majority in the Security Council so that public opinion can see the true face of the American government....It is clear that the United States of America is presently distracted from Europe in the Far East. Does it not give us an advantage in the global balance of power? It undoubtedly does⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ Donggil Kim and William Stueck, "Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?" *North Korea International Documentation Project* (June, 2008), E-Dossier #1, 5.

William Steuck explains that the opposite was true. The US deployed more forces in Europe at the early stage of the Korean War. This was Stalin's worst nightmare. Stueck claims that Stalin certainly recognized that there would be discussions of a preventive war against the Soviet Union in some high circles within the American government.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, it was clear that Stalin believed that the US could not start another war because of its reduced military capability (especially smaller ground forces).⁵⁰ Lewis explains well about the poor situation of the US armed forces in 1950:

Considering the decisions made by Truman, Congress, the American people, and the armed forces it can be argued that they all were responsible for the sorry state of the armed forces in June 1950, which needlessly cost so many American lives. The Truman Administration had placed its trust in nuclear weapons and strategic bombing, in mutual defense treaties and in military aid and assistance to nations fighting Communism. The Congress had cut the budget of the armed forces beyond that recommended by the Truman Administration. The American people had opposed universal military training and were dissatisfied with conscription under the Selective Service System during times of peace. The Army demobilization was completed on 30 June 1947 with the discharge of the last non-volunteer forces. The total strength of the Army on 1 July was 989,664, including 364,000 Air Forces personnel who would form the US Air Forces. Congress and the American people had not supported the Organized Reserve Corps (ORC) and National Guard (NG)...When war came, the Army was too small, with too many missions, dispersed in too many parts of the world...The majority of the Army was not prepared for war. All the reduction in the size of the Army, all the missions and responsibilities, all the overseas deployments, and all the budget cuts made it impossible for the Army to train in a comprehensive manner. The Army, with all this turbulence, had difficulty maintaining cohesive combat units.⁵¹

The US army was not prepared for war in Europe. The US government actually worried about another attack from the Soviet Union in Europe and Taiwan because they did not have a large enough ground forces for a preemptive strike and adequate defense against the Soviet

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 4

⁵⁰ Kim Donggil, "Stalin's Korea U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, no.1 (June 2011): 109-114.

⁵¹ Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, 80-84

Union in other areas.⁵² The US ground forces had largely been reduced after the end of the Second World War while the Soviet Union ground forces were maintained at over 100 divisions. Stalin recognized the situation of the reduced US ground forces and also knew that the US military build-up in Europe did not mean an immediate attack from the United States because the US and Europe did not want another war only five years after the end of the Second World War. Stalin stated that:

Let us suppose that American government continues to be tied down in the Far East and also pulls China into the struggle for the freedom of Korea and its own independence. What might come of this? First, America, just like any other country, cannot cope with China, a country with such large armed forces at the ready. It follow that America would overextended itself in this struggle. Second, having overextended itself in this matter, America would be incapable of a third world war in the near future. Therefore, a third world war would be postponed for an indeterminate period, which would provide the time necessary to strengthen socialism in Europe, not to mention that the struggle between America and China would revolutionize the entire Far East. Does all this not give us an advantage from the perspective of the global balance of power? It unquestionably does.⁵³

This telegram, arguably, showed Stalin's real thinking.⁵⁴ There has been a wrong assumption of the relationship between Stalin and Kim Il Sung. Because of Stalin's fear about the growing population of Asian people in Manchuria against the Japanese Empire, Stalin purged millions of Korean people, including many Korean communists, during the 1930's. Stalin's attitude toward the Korean peninsula had not changed until January, 1950. Nikita Khrushchev remembers:

While maintaining that the war was at the initiative of Comrade Kim Il Sung. Our advisers, when they planned this operation, probably did not take everything into account and did not give everything needed. For this, of course,

⁵² Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, 80.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 5

⁵⁴ Kim Donggil., "Stalin's Korea U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War," 89.

I think Stalin was to blame. Kim didn't need much more on top of what had already been given. We, of course, could have provided the tanks for another tank corps, which I think would have been enough...If we hadn't refused him aid in qualified personnel to assess the distribution of forces and to direct operations, there's no doubt that North Korea would have been victorious. I think if Kim had received just one more tank corps, or two at the most, he could have accelerated his advance south and occupied Pusan on the march. The war would have ended then and there.⁵⁵

It is speculated that Khrushchev criticized Stalin about the Korean War because he wanted to blame everything on Stalin for political reasons. However, evidence supports that Khrushchev's estimate was not made totally for political reasons. Thornton demonstrates that Stalin did not provide the KPA with anti-aircraft weapons, not even to protect Pyongyang, despite the fact that American air power was increasingly effective at long-range interdiction and close air support. Stalin might have wanted to avoid the direct conflict against the US air forces in Korea. According to Yu Seongchul's testimony⁵⁶, Kim Il Sung expressed dissatisfaction with his own minister about a lack of support for large-scale river crossing equipment for troops crossing the Han River.⁵⁷ Recently, Jang Jin sung, who was one of the official writing members of the Official History of Kim Il Sung's Family in North Korea and who fled from North Korea to South Korea, testified that Kim Il Sung openly blamed Stalin for the Korean War at the party conference in 1976. According to Jang's testimony, Kim had a speech:

Do you know why I set the defense industry as the first priority rather than the agriculture industry or light industry after the Korean War? It was because of Stalin. Stalin was the worst person who spoiled and ruined the war and our

⁵⁵ Thornton, *Odd Man Out*, 408.; Jerrold L. Shechter and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov, eds. *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tape* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), 146.; Strobe Talbott, eds. *Khrushchev Remembers* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1971), 370.

⁵⁶ Yu Song Chul was a Major General Operation Bureau Commander of the KPA General Staff during the Korean War and freed from North Korea to Russia later because of Kim Il Sung's purge

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 233. ; "Yu Song-chol's Testimony." December 27, 1990, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service – East Asian Survey (FBIS-EAS)* (Washington D.C. : Central Intelligence Agency) Part 10, 29.

country. Because of the three days delay in Seoul, we missed the opportunity to win the war. I deeply regret this and never forget it. If we advanced southward without three days delay in Seoul, the US government would have changed their thoughts. Stalin completely broke his promise to provide necessary equipment and weapons. It was very difficult to advance southward at that time without them. The Soviet men kept making dirty excuses that they did not expect the KPA's quick occupation of Seoul. Those excuses were totally lies. Stalin did not want to provide equipment and weapons because he feared the US. I was a nervous wreck, because I had to stay in Seoul for three days because of Stalin's broken promise. Stalin only had a commercial spirit. Stalin did not give us weapons and supplies for free before the war. Stalin took everything of our power plant, steelworks, main facilities and installations with their blueprints when the Japanese people left. I strongly opposed when Stalin wanted to take all railways. That was why I believed and decided the development of an independent defense industry was the top priority for unification.⁵⁸

Kim Il Sung might have shifted his responsibility of the loss of the War to Stalin.

Nevertheless, the three day delay of the KPA in Seoul at the initial stage of war was the most mysterious question of the Korean War. A common answer to this question was the Kim Il Sung and Park Hun Young believed the assumption that the 200,000 members of the South Korean Worker's Party would start their uprising if the KPA occupied in Seoul. However, the Soviet advisors were professional military officers who participated in numerous battles in diverse terrain during the Second World War. The making of the war plan based on the worst scenario was the basic principle for military officers. It was possible that young and inexperienced Kim Il Sung believed the best scenario: Non US-intervention and the uprising of the South Korean Worker's Party. However, the Soviet advisors did not have to believe Park Hun Young's big talk of 200,000 uprising.

Hwang Jang Yop, who was a high ranking North Korea politician,⁵⁹ also remembered that Kim Il Sung had always regreted that he missed the opportunity to unite the two Koreas,

⁵⁸ Jang Jin Sung's Testimony. See accessed March 1, 2015. <http://www.chogabje.com/> (Accessed March 1, 2015).

⁵⁹ Hwang Jang Yop crafted the Juche Ideology and freed from North Korea to South Korea

because the KPA could not cross the Han River and delayed its advancement for three days in Seoul⁶⁰.

Thorton demonstrates that Stalin knew the chance to prevent American intervention had already been lost when Stalin demanded of Kim Il Sung in Seoul that the attack absolutely must continue. When the KPA occupied in Seoul, there had been no uprising that Kim Il Sung and Park Hun Young expected. Instead, the US government decided to send its ground forces. Kim Il Sung and the KPA were in chaos. In the correspondence between Stalin and his representative Shtykov dated July 1, 1950 Stalin demanded to know what Kim Il Sung had decided to do after the occupation of Seoul. To obtain Kim's agreement to press the attack, Stalin promised additional equipment for the offensive. Stalin promised by July 10 to fully fulfill the Koreans' requests for delivery of ammunition and other military equipment.⁶¹

Stalin continually maintained his low risk/ maximum gain strategy towards the Korean War.⁶² It was not certain that Stalin did expect the US intervention in his mind before the Korean War, but he gave a freehand to the US at the UN Security Council, and he maintained his low risk/ maximum gain strategy when the US decided to send ground forces to the Korean peninsula. Stalin bolstered the KPA's advancement without additional direct support and he knew that the KPA did not have any reserve forces and sufficient logistic for more than one month of war. When the armistice process went on, Stalin ordered the Chinese and North Korean leaders to delay the negotiation as long as possible to keep the US forces in Korea. Kim Il Sung

⁶⁰ Hwan Jang Yop's Testimonial, See accessed March 1, 2015. <http://www.chogabje.com/> (accessed March 1, 2015).

⁶¹ Thornton, *Odd Man Out*, 231.

⁶² Bruce Cumings firstly used this term Stalin's maximum gain / low risk strategy in his book. See Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 2*

asked for a quick armistice in 1951 because he worried about a continuous strategic bombing of the US air forces into all industry areas of North Korea and unnecessary casualties of the KPA. Nevertheless, Stalin never allowed the armistice until he died. In a meeting with Kim Il Sung in Moscow when Stalin called Peng Duhuai and Kim Il Sung for a talk about an armistice, Stalin said, “Do not accept any offers from the US side. Delay the negotiation as long as possible. Except the North Korean People’s casualties in rear and the frontline, it is great if we keep the US forces in Korean peninsula as long as possible.”⁶³ Millett explains that militarily China and the Soviet Union had multiple motives to let the war continue while the United State had many reasons to end the war. China wanted to train and rearm the PLA. As long as the CVF fought and died, China would receive more military assistance from the Soviet Union. Because many soldiers of the CVF were former Nationalist Army soldiers a few years ago, the enemy against Mao, Mao did not care their casualties and they wanted to go to Taiwan then they became the prisoner of war in South Korea territory. The Soviet Union could developed their air defense system without their casualties against actual foe, the US Air Force.⁶⁴

During the Korean War, Kim Il Sung was humiliated by the US and ROK Army, however, much bigger psychological shock was from his partners, the Soviet Union and China. Thus, his humiliation during the Korean War directly influenced Kim Il Sung to push his great purge towards pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese North Korean politicians after the end of the Korean War and to create the *Juche* ideology, self-reliance theory.

⁶³ Transcripts of Conversation between Stalin and Zhu Enlai held 20 August 1952, 3. September 1952, and 19 September 1952 from Danny Rozas and Katheryn Weathersby, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* vol. 6-7 (Winter 1995/1996), 5-20.; Kathryn Weathersby and 강규형, “북-중-소 삼각관계가 6.25 전쟁 과정과 전후 북한외교 행태에 미친 영향: 기밀해제문서를 중심으로.” *정신문화연구* 33, no. 3 (2010):135.

⁶⁴ Millett, *The War for Korea 1950-1951*, 14.

The War was a political gamble not a military adventure of Kim Il Sung. The KPA did not have full preparation to conduct the Soviet way of war. The KPA did not have reserve forces, full mobilizations, and enough tanks. The war was not the Soviet way of war but a way of people's war (Mao). The KPA conducted operation based on uprising of South communists and non-US intervention. These two assumptions were wrong. Kim's political gamble was failed. This was the Chinese communists' model of war not the Soviet model of war.

Stalin's basic assumption was that the US did not want a Third World War against China from this small peninsula and could not occupy the mainland of China. Stalin also had to be concerned about the US nuclear weapons because there were men like Le May who wanted to destroy China and Soviet Union with nuclear weapons. Only the US had the means of delivering such weapons in the early 1950's, only the US had used atomic bombs, and only the US had destroyed nation-states with bombs – the fire bombings of Japan and destruction of Germany. Stalin thought about these capabilities. It is not sure whether Stalin believed in non-US intervention or whether he actually wanted US intervention. However, it was clear that Stalin wanted to use the Korean War for his own interests when the US decided to send its ground forces to the war, and he did not care if the KPA won the war or not after US intervention. His political and strategic objective from this war after the US intervention was making the war into the US-China conflict and prolonging the war to keep the US forces out as long as possible. It probably would lead to a low possibility of another war in Europe. At the same time, the US-China conflict made sure that China would be a large buffer zone against any threats from the US and Japan towards the Russian Far East that had historically been treated as a weakness of Russia.⁶⁵ From this war, Stalin achieved a great security buffer zone for Russia Far Eastern area

⁶⁵ Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, 70.

with very cheap costs, spent by his junior partners, China and North Korea. Stalin's strategic calculation for this limited war before the US intervention is as follows:

Scenario	Advantage to Stalin	Disadvantage to Stalin
If the KPA win the war without Chinese intervention	Buffer Zone against the US and Japanese threats	No
If the KPA lose the war without Chinese intervention	No	A ROK supported by the US with contiguous borders with Soviet Union although Stalin already had a strategic reserve area, Manchuria against the US and Japanese threats.
If the KPA win the war, with Chinese intervention	Buffer Zone against the US and Japanese threats + the US-China Conflict + No major war in Europe near future	No
If the KPA lose the war with Chinese intervention	The US-China Conflict + No major war in Europe near future	ROK+ US forces on its border. A ROK supported by the US with contiguous borders with Soviet Union although Stalin already had a strategic reserve area, Manchuria against the US and Japanese threats.
If no winner in the war with Chinese intervention	The US-China Conflict + No major war in Europe near future	No

Table 1: Stalin's Strategic Calculation towards the Korean War - Maximum Gain/ Low Risk

During the war, the American perception of Stalin's intentions and motivation for the war were far from reality. Henry Kissinger explains that:

Washington's assessment of risks was based on a number of misconceptions...America assumed that it was facing a centrally controlled communist conspiracy to take over the world. And if Moscow called the shots, it followed that neither China nor Korea would have entered the war without being assured of Soviet backing. The Kremlin, Washington now believed, would not accept defeat; it would raise the ante after every setback for its clients. By aiming for limited victory, America might trigger a general war with the Soviet Union. America therefore could not afford to win even a limited victory because the communist bloc would pay any price in order not to lose. The reality was quite different. Stalin had gone along with the North Korean attack only after Kim Il Sung had assured him that it would involve little risk of war. Insofar as Stalin encouraged the Chinese to intervene, it was probably to increase China's dependence on the Soviet Union. The real fanatics on the issue were in Beijing and Pyongyang; the Korean War was not a Kremlin plot to draw America into Asia so that it could then attack Europe. The deterrent to a Soviet attack on Europe was the Strategic Air Command, which was not used in Korea. The Soviet Union had little, if any, nuclear striking power. Given the disparity in nuclear strength, Stalin had far more to lose from general war than the United States. No matter how great the disparity in ground forces in Europe, it is highly improbable that Stalin would have run the risk of war with the United States over Korea. As it was, Stalin's aid to China was grudging, and he demanded cash payment for it, sowing the seeds of the Sino-Soviet rift.⁶⁶

The Korean War was neither the Stalin's War nor Kremlin-controlled War. Stalin and the Soviets looked carefully at every detail and process of the war and limited the actions of the advisors but its aim was mainly deterring a Third World War and limiting the scope of the war.⁶⁷ Stalin rejected Mao's early intervention which was able to guarantee the victory of Kim Il Sung and rejected the Soviet advisors' movement to South which Kim Il Sung desperately asked. When the UN forces reached the Yalu river, Stalin suggested Kim Il Sung to give up the war and to flee from his country and then start his new partisan fighting in Manchuria. Stalin did not want to lose anything from this war. Truman Administration continually considered Stalin's

⁶⁶ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York City, NY: Simon & Schuster INC, 1994), 483.

⁶⁷ Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars has numerous Russian documents to show how the Soviet took care of details of the war process during the war, including advices of changing a chain of command and disapproval of advisor's movement to South. Recent declassified report of former Soviet defense attaché and ambassador Razubaev shows how the Soviet advisors evaluated and checked the performance of the KPA during the war.

calculation during the war and the fear of Stalin's intention in Korea was not right. Kissinger concludes that:

The belief that the Soviet Union stood poised for general war revealed an extraordinary loss of touch with the real power relationships. Stalin was not looking for a pretext to start a general war; he was most eager to avoid it. Had he sought a confrontation, there were more than enough pretexts available in Europe or in the military actions already taking place in Korea. Not surprisingly, at no stage of the war did the Soviet Union threaten to intervene or to take any military action. Nothing in Stalin's cautious and suspicious character suggested a reckless adventurer; he always preferred stealth and indirection to actual confrontation, and had been especially careful not to run a risk of war with the United States – with good reason. Given the disparity in the nuclear capabilities of the two sides, it was the Soviet Union had everything to lose in a general war.⁶⁸

During the early stages of the Cold War, the Korean War was a very important point to make a new world order. From this war, the US and the Soviet Union had maintained an *artificial limited war* to avoid nuclear war.⁶⁹ William Stueck's expression was right: the Korean War was international history and a substitute for the Third World War.⁷⁰

Mao's Strategy for the Korean War: Revolutionary Brotherhood

Recent studies on Mao's side of the war have been developed by Chinese scholars with new declassified Chinese language sources. Those studies uncovered macro level pictures of China's reasons for entering the war. Chen Jian interpreted that Mao was an active player in deciding the deployment of ground forces to Korea and his motivation was not passive. According to him, Mao prepared for the war before the start of the Korean War and Mao's

⁶⁸ Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 487.

⁶⁹ Lewis explains the concept of artificial limited war on his book, See *the American Culture of War*, 204-208.

⁷⁰ Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War*, 1.

decision was not a reaction against the US advancement across the 38th parallel, but rather, preparation for Chinese interest.⁷¹ Shen Zhi-hua argues that Mao wanted to send his troops to Korea in early July just two weeks after the outbreak of the war. The PRC leadership expressed eagerness to intervene, Stalin never replied Mao and Kim's request for earlier Chinese intervention.⁷² Stalin might have considered stronger Chinese influence over peninsula where Stalin had an interest after a return of Manchuria to China, and also considered the Third World War against the US. If Mao's troops intervene on early July, the Korean War would have been completely different.

On the micro-level, historians have to study the revolutionary brotherhood between Chinese and Korean soldiers. Korean people in Manchuria largely suffered from not only the Japanese Empire but also the Chinese nationalists. Historically, Korea had politically been dominated by the Chinese dynasties over two thousand years, including many invasions. Koreans see China as a hostile big brother. However, the rise of the Japanese Empire and its brutal policies of suppression led to a strong partnership against the Japanese Army. Before the Chinese Civil War, many Korean guerilla forces were working with Chinese guerilla forces. Generally, the main commanders were Chinese and deputy commanders were Korean of Chinese-Korean anti-Japanese guerilla units in Manchuria. Young Kim Il Sung's most important mentor was a Chinese man, Wei Zhengmin, who was the political commissar of the First Route Army of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army, during Kim's guerilla days from 1935 to 1941. Suh Dae

⁷¹ Chen Jian, *China's road to the Korean War: the making of the Sino-American confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994)

⁷² Shen Zhi-hua, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War," 53-54.; Zhihua Shen, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force," 215-216.

Sook explains the relationship between young Kim Il Sung and Wei Zhengmin. Wei was sent to Manchuria by the Chinese Communist Party in 1932, and he was secretary of the East Manchurian Special Committee in 1934. Wei participated in the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in Moscow in 1935 as a delegate of the Chinese Communist Party, and he served as chairman of the Political Committee of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army under its commander Yang Jinkyu. Kim Il Sung fought in this army as well, and Wei is the one who came closest in teaching him about communism.⁷³

Kim Il Sung took a leading role in trying to forge Sino-Korean cooperation in the Manchurian guerrilla struggle, helped along by his fluency in Chinese. After the establishment of Manchukuo around 80 percent of anti-Japanese guerrillas and upward of 90 percent of the members of the “Chinese Communist Party” were Koreans. By February 1936 a formidable Sino-Korean army had emerged, with Kim commanding the 3rd Division and several Chinese regional commanders under him. Koreans were still largest ethnic forces in the late 1930’s, constituting 80 percent of two regiments, 50 percent of another, and so on.⁷⁴

Mu Jong, who became the 2nd Corps Commander during the early stage of the war, was an aide-de-camp to the future Supreme commander Peng Dehuai of the People’s Volunteer Army (PVA) during the Korean War. Peng introduced Mu Jong’s wife to Mu Jong and hosted Mu Jong’s ceremony.⁷⁵ Because of the close connection between Peng and Mu Jong, Kim Il Sung treated Mu Jong as his political rival. The Soviet Union blocked his return with his forces, the Korean Volunteer Army (KVA) (朝鮮義勇軍), when he tried to enter Korea after liberation in 1945, because the Soviet Union was concerned about the Chinese influences in his rising with

⁷³ Suh Dae Sook, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988), 8.

⁷⁴ Cumings, *The Korean War*, 52.

⁷⁵ 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2* (서울: 나남출판, 1996), 710-711.

his forces.⁷⁶ Kim Il Sung appointed Mu Jong as a supreme artillery commander, which was an unimportant post of the KPA. Many future KPA leaders worked with Chinese Communist forces closely. More than half of the KPA soldiers were veterans of the Chinese Civil War, except for guerilla veterans who closely worked with Chinese guerilla forces in Manchuria. This personal connection between major officers of the KPA and the PLA was strong and they knew each other very well. Because of this revolutionary brother hood, North Korea not only gave a rear base in North Korea for the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) but also deployed about 30,000 KPA soldiers in 1948 during the Chinese Civil War, an important reason for the victory of the CCF. Between 50,000 and 75,000 CCF soldiers retreated to a rear base of North Korea between 1946 and 1947.

China agreed with the return of the Korean-Chinese Communist Forces (between 67,000 and 100,000) after the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949 and 1950.⁷⁷ Without these veterans from China, the KPA could not have started the war in June 1950, June. Thus, without North Korea's help, China would have faced more difficulties to achieve the victory, while the KPA could not have started the war without Chinese agreement of the return of the Korea CCF forces. This revolutionary brotherhood and personal connection between major officers of the KPA and the PLA over the decades is considered one of the most important reasons why China decided to

⁷⁶ The Korean Volunteer Army (KVA) (朝鮮義勇軍) was created in Yen-an, China in 1939 and its school was established near Yen-an for training military and political leaders for a future independent Korea. Mu Chong was the supreme commander of the KVA. This was different from 東北抗日聯軍 or 朝鮮人民革命軍, in which Kim Il Sung participated. I will explain this more on later chapter of this book. See 염인호, *조선의용군의 독립운동* (서울: 나남출판, 2001); 임경석, *한국 사회주의의 기원* (서울: 역사비평사, 2003); 임경석, *잊을 수 없는 혁명가들에 대한 기록* (서울: 역사비평사, 2008)

⁷⁷ 백학순, "중국내전시 북한의 중국공산당을 위한 군사원조: 북한군의 파병 및 후방기지 제공." *한국과 국제정치*, 19, (1994, 6): 263-281.

enter the Korean War. This relationship was very different from the relationship between the Soviet army and the KPA. Many soldiers of the KPA personally disliked the Soviet army's arrogance and their crimes, including numerous rapes and thefts from 1945 to 1950. Ju Young Bok remembers many crimes committed by the Soviet Army and personal conflicts between the KPA and the Soviet Army before the war.⁷⁸ China entered the war because of their own realistic interest but their participation had to be a continuous story based on the relationship between China and North Korea from the 1930's as united guerilla forces against the Japanese Empire. They fought together for national liberation in the 1930's, a Chinese communists firstly won the civil war to unite China with North Korea's help. During the Korean War, Chinese had to help Korean communists to unite Korea. Realistic reasons, such as support of the Soviet Union, were the top motivation for China's decision to enter the war. But, without explaining this revolutionary brotherhood relationship over the decades, studies about China's motivation to enter the war would miss an important piece of the picture. It was because the war was conducted by human beings, who have emotion, anger, loyalty, memory, ideology, pride, humiliation, revengeful thoughts and a sense of betrayal. Mao's decision to intervene in the Korean War to save North Korea precluded the destruction of the Nationalist forces on Taiwan. However, basically, the American threat was more significant than the defeated Nationalist threat. The American actions in North Korea were a direct threat to the survival of Communist China because only the US had the power to reverse the 1949 revolution.

⁷⁸ 주영복, *내가 겪은 조선전쟁*, 32-43, 76-81, 112-117.

Kim Il Sung's Strategy for the Korean War:

A Political Gamble of Unprepared and Passionate Revolutionaries

Many studies had interpreted that Kim Il Sung's political goal was simply a quick unification by rapid occupation of Seoul based on his three assumptions: Non-US intervention, 200,000 South Korean Worker's Party members uprising when Seoul was in the hands of Kim Il Sung and the ability of the KPA to defeat the ROKA in a ground war. His political goal might have been simple and clear, but his strategy and its decision making process was more complex. Recent studies show that the Defense minister Ch'oe Yong-gon opposed the invasion plan because of the high possibility of US intervention. The Head of State Kim Tu-bong delivered a speech some days before the invasion that the occupation of Seoul would be their final strategic objective of this invasion.⁷⁹ It shows that there had been many debates among the North Korean elite regarding the strategic objective for the war during the decision-making process. What was the center of gravity for the KPA's invasion? - The occupation of the Capital or the destruction of the ROK Army or the ROK Government or destruction of the will of the people. When the KPA occupied Seoul and the US decided to enter the war, the North Korean elites were in chaos and panic. Why did the KPA stay in Seoul for three days without continuous advancement at the initial stage of the War? Did the KPA have a plan to advance towards Pusan before the war?

Suh Dae Sook argues that Kim's reasons for the war should be examined in terms of North Korean politics. Kim Il Sung created the KPA because he wanted to win the political struggle via the KPA against his political rivals, including Chinese-Koreans, Soviet-Koreans, domestic Korean communists and the South Korean worker's party. Suh pointed out three domestic causes of the Korean War: Kim's resolve to reunify the country militarily, his difficulty

⁷⁹ 박명림, *한국 전쟁의 발발과 기원* 1, 289, 308.

in the 1949-1950 two-year economic plan, and his precarious relationship with the Communists from the South. Many Korean revolutionaries who returned from abroad thought that Korea should be reunified, and Syngman Rhee in the South made his intention “to march North” known to the people of Korea. The difference between Kim and Rhee was that Kim was able to implement his plan and prepare his army for the task.⁸⁰ Suh explains that the paramount interest of Kim Il Sung and his faction was to have the big army and military equipment that they so sorely lacked in the 1930’s. Suh demonstrates that Kim Il Sung made no reference to Soviet help in building the KPA in his speech at the founding of the KPA ceremony on February 8, 1948.⁸¹

Throughout the process of the creation of the KPA, Kim Il Sung and his faction gained the political power, and Kim purged his political rivals, including Mu Jong, Ho Gu-I, and Park Hun Young, through the three-year war. In the end, Kim became the king of the Hermit Kingdom throughout the great purge after the Korean War and by creating the ideology, Juche (self-reliance). The creation of the KPA and the Korean War were the most effective tools for Kim Il Sung to become the king of his Kingdom.

For Kim, the Korean War was a continuation of the battles he had been fighting for much of his life. Kim Il Sung and the officers of the KPA were guerilla forces and included the Chinese communist forces. They fought for many years as primary group against the Japanese imperial army or Chinese nationalist army, who had persecuted and plundered them for decades. They died together in battle field and they saved each other. Their families, friends and nations suffered from their enemies in Manchuria and Korea. Many key posts of the ROK Army were held by former Japanese army officers who were enemies of the communists. In this sense,

⁸⁰ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 112.

⁸¹ Cumings, *The Korean War*, 56-57.

personal or collective hatred and angers were forces that motivated the KPA to start their people's war and the most important reasons to lead the bloody war. To a large portion of the KPA soldiers, the Korean War was a continuous war against their same enemies from the 1930's: the Japanese collaborationists. The rivalry between Kim Il Sung in North Korea and Kim Sokwon of the ROK Army is an example. Cumings shows that Kim Sok-won was the commander of the First Division of the ROKA and he was a former North Korean who had tracked Kim Il Sung in the Manchuria in the late 1930's. At that time, Kim was known as Kaneyama Shakugen and he was later closed to Syngman Rhee.⁸²

Kim Il Sung had diverse motivations and strategies towards the Korean War. From the creation of the KPA and the War, Kim Il Sung wanted to be the king of the reunified Korea. Kim Il Sung was a key player during the preparation for the creation of the KPA and the war. Kim Il Sung did not want significant influence and intervention from the Soviet Union and China, and this was based on his own experiences from the 1930's as the members of the Chinese-Korean forces and the Soviet 88th special brigade. Kim Il Sung really wanted to have a strong independent army and he wanted to remove his enemies, who were former Japanese officers of the ROK Army. Kim Il Sung already started the Mao style people's war in 1945 and the ROK government would not have existed without its victory from the Phase Two insurgency war between 1948 and 1950. Unknown stories of Kim Il from the 1930's had to be considered an important reason why he started the people's war beyond his political ambition. Kim Il Sung and the key commanders of the KPA were neither born in 1950 nor existed from vacuum. Their

⁸² Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 2*, 390.

anger and hatred were the important motivation to erase the enemy and to lead the bloody war. However, a unified, independent Korea was their primary objective.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung had different strategic objectives toward the Korean War. They were teamed as communist countries against the United States but they had different motivations and strategies for their own interests. Before being a communist, they were basically nationalists who had bloody memories and post-traumatic stress disorder from their own experiences, including the Great Patriotic War, the Chinese Civil War or guerilla experiences in Manchuria. Stalin maintained lower risk and maximum gain strategy and wanted to use the war in order to deter not only the major war in Europe but also the Chinese invasion of Taiwan. To Mao, the American threat was more significant than defeated Nationalist threat. The American actions in North Korea were a direct threat to the survival of Communist China because only the US had the power to reverse the 1949 revolution. In addition to this motivation, to Mao, this war was not his war but he had to consider the relationship with North Korea. Many North Koreans worked with Mao's forces over the decades against the Japanese Empire and the Chinese Nationalists. Mao had to consider this revolutionary brotherhood between soldiers of China and North Korea. To Kim Il Sung, his primary objective was a unified and independent Korea. In addition to this, to Kim Il Sung, this war was a continuous war from the 1930's against the Japanese collaborationists. Kim Il Sung believed wrong assumptions (Non US intervention and uprising of the South Korean Worker's Party) and some possibility of his big brother's direct support for any possible crisis, Stalin. But, Stalin had to calculate his own interest. Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung remember a simple aphorism: There was neither forever enemies nor forever friends.

3. The Origins of the Junior Partner's Forces

The founding of the People's Army fills our people with great pride and signifies another brilliant victory for them. But, although we have the People's Army, we must not allow ourselves to rest content or to be carried away by the victory. The creation of the People's Army is only the first step towards building up the powerful, modern armed forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which must be established in the future. It means that only the skeleton has been built. That is why all the people, as well as all military personnel, must do everything in their power to strengthen and develop the People's Army founded today and ensure that its invincible might is demonstrated to the world.

- Kim Il Sung, A speech for a celebration of the Korean People's Army's birth, February 8, 1948⁸³

The KPA was an institution that had diverse cultural backgrounds. Some soldiers who worked with the CCP used guerilla tactics to fight against the Japanese Empire in Manchuria, and they later fled to Russia and became Soviet soldiers. Some soldiers worked with the Chinese Communist Members during the Chinese Civil War against Chinese Nationalists employing conventional tactics. Other soldiers who served as Soviet soldiers fought against Nazi Germany during the Second World War fighting on the Eastern front. In this chapter, I explain who the elites of the KPA were and where they came from. In particular, three different groups became core members of the KPA. They differed in their experiences and backgrounds and these different experiences shaped the dynamic culture of the KPA. The current historiography only focuses on the Soviet material culture of the KPA and tends to conclude that the KPA was a Soviet product for two reasons. First, many soldiers were trained in the Soviet Union, including Kim Il Sung himself. Second, the KPA received tanks, artilleries, weapons, equipment, trucks, doctrines and trainings from the Soviet Union after the Second World War. The Soviet Union

⁸³ "On the Occasion of the Founding of the Korean People's Army, Speech at a Review of the Korean People's Army, February 8, 1948," in Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 4: January-December 1948* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981), 88.

left some of their equipment and weapons when they withdrew from North Korea and later they also sent a lot of equipment and weapons to North Korea. Nevertheless, the KPA was not just a product of the Soviet Union. It has a combination of diverse cultural influences, including and most importantly Chinese cultural influence. Kim Il Sung's group, the leading group of the KPA, had worked with the CCP for more than a decade. More than half of the KPA soldiers came back from China. Because of these two reasons, Chinese cultural influence was more significant than the Soviet material culture. Historians tend to ignore the human and cultural factors of the KPA and only looked at the Soviet material culture. Although Kim Il Sung's group thought that the Sovietization was an important modernization process of the KPA, Kim Il Sung had been a child of Maoistic guerilla warfare school for more than a decade.

Koreans and Chinese are Asians. They look similar, culturally similar and geographically similar. Russians are essentially Europeans, Western national and ethnic group. Russians lived and acted like Europeans, not Asians. There is no similarities culturally. There is greater cultural affinity between the Chinese and Koreans than between the Russians and Koreans. The ethnic Korean population actually span three cultures, Korean, Chinese and Russian. There were some Koreans spoke Russian better than they spoke Korean, people who fought on the Eastern front. These multi-culture Koreans all contributed to the makings of North Korea. However, the Chinese culture was dominant for many reasons, geography, numbers, demographics, history, economic integration, and others.

Furthermore, at a tactical and operational level, the KPA was not a Soviet army. The KPA did not have basic and core elements of the Soviet Deep Operation, which would have included a second echelon, massive reserve forces, and a defense industry in the rear area. The performance of the KPA during the war was not typical of Soviet tactics and operation. The

Soviet army never stopped its advancement before achieving their tactical and operational objectives and they never started the operational and tactical offensive without enough reserve forces and material support in a rear area. During the Second World War, GOSPLAN and the General Staff of the Soviet Union planned operations by considering logistics and supply support.⁸⁴ The KPA did not have GOSPLAN and did not consider logistics and supply support. If the Soviet Army was in the KPA's place, they would not have started the war on June of 1950 and they would not have conducted the war in the way that the KPA did. At the tactical and operational level of war, the KPA was not a product of the Soviet Union. The KPA's performance showed diverse cultural influences, including guerilla warfare from 1948 to 1949, as well as encirclement and night operation. I explain further in the chapters, the Soviet and Chinese ways of war. In this chapter, I examine the three core groups of the KPA and where these diverse groups came from.

According to the North Korean Worker's Party, the KPA has its root in the anti-Japanese guerrilla forces organized on April 25, 1932. As a predecessor of the KPA, the Korean People's Revolutionary Army, was created in May 1934, and was headed by Kim Il Sung. This Army fought against the Imperial Japanese fascist oppression. From the Party's explanation, Kim Il Sung decided the Korean people could be liberated only through an armed struggle. Kim Il Sung

⁸⁴ For Soviet military strategy, operation and defense industry, please see David M. Glantz, *The Soviet conduct of war* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Soviet Army Studies Office, 1987); *The Soviet conduct of tactical maneuver: spearhead of the offensive* (London, Frank Cass, 1991); *Soviet military operational art: in pursuit of deep battle* (London: Frank Cass, 1991); V. K. Triandafillov, *The Nature of the Operations of Contemporary Armies* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994); Lennart Samuelson and Vitaly Shlykov, *Plans for Stalin's War Machine: Tukhachevskii and Military-Economic Planning, 1925-1941* (London: Macmillan Press LTD, 2000); Sally W. Stoecker, *Forging Stalin's Army: Marshal Tukhachevsky and the Politics of Military Innovation* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998); David R. Stone, *Hammer and Rifle: The Militarization of the Soviet Union, 1926-1933* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000)

made the same argument with the founding of the Korean People's Army on February 8, 1948.⁸⁵

In speech for the founding ceremony of the army, Kim Il Sung many times emphasized that the root of the KPA was in the anti-Japanese guerilla forces:

The People's Army must carry on the glorious revolutionary traditions of the anti-Japanese guerrillas, and the soldiers must acquire the ardent patriotism and indomitable revolutionary spirit of the guerrillas. Education of the soldiers in the revolutionary traditions should be strengthened so that all of them will love their country and people fervently and devote their lives to struggling in their behalf, just as the anti-Japanese guerrillas did earlier.⁸⁶

Kim Il Sung and his group found the root of the KPA in their experience as guerrilla forces, and their harsh life and bloody experiences as young guerilla forces finally became the ideological foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Kim Il Sung and his colleagues emphasized the military tradition for the KPA came from their experiences in the 1930's and 1940's. Kang gon, the Army Chief of Staff stated that:

The youthful Korean People's Army has grown during the past two years under trying and difficult circumstances to become an army capable of defending the Fatherland and the people. This is another triumph of the Korean people which would not have been possible in a capitalistic country. It is because the Korean People's Army has its roots in the working people as a whole and because it was created on a democratic foundation politically, economically, and culturally, developed with the selfless assistance of the Soviet government and the Soviet Army.⁸⁷

Kim Kwang Un points out that Kim Il Sung's group as a guerilla force unit emphasizes their military and revolutionary tradition, including their anti-Japanese fighting, and their harsh

⁸⁵ Robert Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 2 The Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 920.

⁸⁶ "On the Occasion of the Founding of the Korean People's Army, Speech at a Review of the Korean People's Army, February 8, 1948," in Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 4: January-December 1948* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981), 174-175.

⁸⁷ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea, Part 2*, 921; and Kang Kon, "General Kim Il Sung's Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Unit Constitutes the Combatant Core of the Korean People's Army," *Kulloja*, Jan. 31, 1950, 10-26.

experiences in Manchuria. This led to a strong motivation to create their army in the image of the PLA of which they were a part⁸⁸. To Kim Il Sung's group, the KPA was not the new army but the continuous organization which they had created in the 1930's. This justification of Kim's group helped to establish their legitimacy as founding fathers of DPRK against rival factions for political leadership. Scalapino and Lee show the effort of Kim's group to legitimize their status:

Kang Kon, the Army Chief of Staff, went on to assert that the Korean People's Army had inherited the shining tradition of Kim's anti-Japanese guerrilla forces, forces able to grow, even when deprived of a territorial base, by sinking their roots among the masses and creating "guerrilla districts" run by the peasants – with schools, hospitals, communications centers, even and a bomb-manufacturing plant. Kang also indicated that it was after the Manchurian Incident (September 18, 1931) that partisan activities "developed around Kim Il Sung's forces," close relations being established with such other partisan leaders as Kim Ch'aek and Ch'oe Yong-gon...General Kim Il Sung had transformed all the guerrilla partisans in Esatern Manchuria into a united body under his leadership by the end of 1934 (Korean People's Revolutionary Army).⁸⁹

The North Korean regime published a biography of Kim Il Sung in English under the pen name, Baik Bong, in 1970 in Tokyo. These three volumes were all about a glorification of Kim Il Sung's life and propaganda of their Juche Ideology of Self Reliance. Even though these were propaganda, these works interestingly chronicle Kim Il Sung's life. On the birth of Korean People's Army, Baik Bong wrote:

Kim Il Sung considered that the creation of a real army of the people was an indispensable condition for building Korea into a sovereign and independent state, because no nation lacking its own regular army could be called an independent state. After liberation in particular, when the US imperialist aggressors, the masterminds of world reaction, had replaced the Japanese imperialists in occupying South Korea and were making a desperate attempt to turn the whole of Korea into their own colony by marshaling the reactionaries in the land and suppressing the South Korean revolutionary forces, the creation of a people's army seemed the most urgent task to him, a question affecting the

⁸⁸ 김광운, "전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설," in *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 1*, eds. 국방부 군사편찬연구소 (서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001), 14.

⁸⁹ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 2*, 921

very destiny of the Korean people, and could not be neglected even for a moment...So Comrade Kim Il Sung regarded the creation of a modern regular army as an integral link in the chain of effort needed for the victory of the Korean revolution, and took the revolutionary principle of national self-defense to be the very basis for national defense construction and a defense policy. The basic principle of national self-defense was the glorious embodiment of his great Juche idea, that the Korean revolution must be accomplished by the Korean people themselves, independently and with their own strength; it was the revolutionary line that Koreans must rely upon their own revolutionary armed forces for the accomplishment of this revolution.⁹⁰

After the 1956 Crisis⁹¹, the North Korean regime removed the Soviet and Chinese support for North Korea from all their records. The Soviet Union provided massive support to the KPA, and the PRC was most responsible for the survival of North Korea during the Korean War. However, after the Soviet-China split and the 1956 crisis of North Korea, Kim Il Sung purged all records of foreign help. The North Korean regime sought to make itself independent of its two powerful neighbors in order to build national pride. Nonetheless, Russian historians had written extensively on the Soviet support for the North Korean regime before the Korean War. These documents were declassified after the Cold War.

The KPA of June 1950 was a final product of three different cultures, Korean (including some legacy of the Japanese Empire), the Soviet Union, and China. Chinese cultural influence was more significant than the Soviet material culture. The KPA was the product of three different groups' participants, Kim Il Sung's group, Yeonan group, and the Soviet-Koreans. The

⁹⁰ Baik Bong, *Kim Il Sung Biography 2: From Building Democratic Korea to Chullima Flight* (Tokyo, Japan: Miraisha, 1970), 224-225.

⁹¹ In 1956, Kim Il Sung's rivals, the Soviet and Yan'an (pro-Chinese) factions, challenged the Kim Il Sung's leadership when Kim Il Sung's a month-long trip to communist countries. Andrei Lankov concludes that the attack on Kim Il Sung's policies at the August Plemum was a desperate attempt to turn the tide rather than a serious challenge to Kim's rule. Sino-Soviet split occurred after the unsuccessful attempt at replacing Kim Il Sung in 1956. Look at the two researches, Andrei Lankov, *Crisis in North Korea: The Failure of De-Stalinization, 1956* (Honolulu, Hawaii: The University of Hawaii Press, 2005); James F. Person, "New Evidence on North Korea in 1956." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 16 (2014): 447-527.

KPA of June 1950 was not only an achievement of Kim Il Sung. At the same time, Kim Il Sung was not a passive agent of the Soviet Union, but an active player having an initiative on the creation of the KPA.

Among Korean historians, the elites of early DPRK were generally divided into four groups. Sue Dae Sook, Robert Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, the first generation of scholars on North Korea, use four categories on the early stage DPRK elites group. They are Kim Il Sung's faction, the Yeonan faction, the Soviet-Korean faction, and domestic communists faction.⁹² They sometimes call Kim Il Sung group as the partisan group but the term of Kim Il Sung group was used in this dissertation. Among them, the nucleus of the KPA was drawn from three backgrounds: Kim Il Sung's group, who were guerilla forces in Manchuria and moved to the Soviet Union in the 1940's, the Yeonan group, who were members of the Korean Volunteer Army (KVA) and had close ties with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and the Soviet-Korean group, who worked as the Soviet Army or Soviet Party members with Soviet citizenship. Because domestic Korean communist group—the largest group—rarely had military experience, they mainly were engaged in party politics and administration, not in the military. Most of the three groups' people were affiliated with the Soviet Union or Chinese communists, and had diverse military experience. With Soviet guidance and support, these three different groups formed the KPA. The origins of the KPA are closely related to pre-1945 history of these three

⁹² Suh Dae-sook, *The Korean Communist Movement, 1941-1948* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967); Kim Il Sung: *The North Korean Leader* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988); Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Regimes 1945-1947* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981); *The Origins of the Korean War 2: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Robert Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 1 The Movement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972)

groups.⁹³ Among them, Kim's faction was the smallest. Nonetheless, they always dominated all key posts of the KPA, while very few members of Kim's group held the key posts of the North Korean Workers' Party (NKWP). Kim's group never gave up the key positions in the army, and they and the Soviet Union blocked the Yeonan faction, which tried to cross the Yalu River with their forces. Because the Soviet Union also feared the return of Yeonan faction's army, who had fought with Mao's army and had close ties with the Chinese Communist Party, the Soviets did not allow the army of the Yeonan faction to enter Korea after the liberation. The Soviets only allowed individuals without arms to enter North Korea.⁹⁴ Suh believes that control of the KPA was a significant benefit to Kim Il Sung's group in winning the rivalry, especially over the Yeonan group:

The Soviet occupation authorities helped Kim fight the local opposition in creating the mass party and also helped him become leader of the newly established republic, but they went one step further and helped to create an armed unit to sustain him. In this endeavor Kim faced the least opposition, and he used his partisan comrades to firmly control the military and security forces. Kim's only potential opposition was the military unit of the Uanan group under Kim Won-bong, Mu Chong, and Pak Il-u, but the Soviet authorities had helped Kim to disarm them when they returned from China. Furthermore, any reference to their military hero Mu Chong as a leader in the North was immediately denounced as promotion of individual heroism by the Soviet-Koreans and the occupation forces.⁹⁵

In particular, Mu Jong of the Yeonan Group had been recognized as a hero and had close ties with the high ranking CCP members. With his strong reputation as a military commander, Mu Jong could have been a strong rival against Kim Il Sung if China's influence had increased over North Korea domestic politics. Mu Jong was the commander of the KVA, which grew to a

⁹³ Kim Kookhun, *The North Korean People's Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1945-1950*, (Ph.D. dissertation., King's College London, 1989), 25

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 36

⁹⁵ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 101.

force of 2,500 men by September of 1945 and later became 4,000 men in November of 1945. According to Suh, Mu Jong was a native of Kyongsong, Hamgyong pukto, Korea and went to China in the early 1920's. Mu Jong was a graduate of the Henan Military Academy and worked for Yan Xishan. And Mu Jong joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926 in Shanghai and worked in the Ruijin Soviet in Jiangxi province. Mu Jong was an artillery officer of the Eighth Route Army during the Long March. And he worked in the Korean Independence League in Yeonan and returned to Korea at the end of the war. At that time, many Koreans people recognized Mu Jong as a genuine general from China. However, he was the great displeasure of Kim Il Sung.⁹⁶

The Yeonan faction had not only Mu Jong, but also Kim Won-bong as a potential rival against Kim Il Sung. They had not only more prestigious military experience as a partner of the CCP forces but also close personal ties with high officials of the CCP. According to Scalapino and Lee, Kim Il Sung was relatively minor leader of the period. He never had direct command of more than 300 partisans. Therefore, there were many more powerful promising future leaders than Kim Il Sung in North Korea. Two of them were Kim Won Bong, who was the leading nationalist-Communist and came very close to uniting all Korean revolutionaries in the China-Manchuira region, and Mu Jong, who had the close relations with the Yeonan Chinese Communists, ultimately won over a significant number of Kim Won-bong's supporters. There were many others who also seemed more likely to succeed than Kim Il Sung.⁹⁷

Kim Il Sung's group probably recognized that their military experience was not as significant as that of the veterans of the Yeonan group. To emphasize their heroic experiences

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 356

⁹⁷ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 1*, 228.

from Manchuria, Kim Il Sung and his group created myths of their guerilla experience and emphasized their revolutionary tradition from their partisan activities, not from the KVA or other anti-Japanese activities, which were more successful achievements than Kim's. Cumings explains how Kim's group feared the rising of his rival faction and the Soviet Union shared their concern over increasing Chinese influence. Even the Soviets doubted Kim's tie with China and the Yeonan group because of his former experience with the CCP with his CCP membership in the 1930s:

After Soviet divisions departed Korea and tens of thousands of officers and soldiers from China came back to Korea, Kim Il Sung and his Manchurian guerrilla allies faced a formidable challenge to their power. In 1946, Kim or the Soviet, or both, refused to allow KVA returnees to enter the North with their accoutrement of weapons and equipment. Instead they urged them to continue fighting in China. This was widely thought to be the consequence of Kim's fear of Mu Chong and other Yanan Koreans. But it is just as likely that the Soviets were the party who blocked the entry of Chinese-linked Koreans. Kim later demonstrated little difficulty in working with Yanan Koreans and several were his interlocutors in adapting Maoist practices to Korea in 1947. Given Kim's own membership in the CCP in the 1930's, it is likely that the Soviets feared an alliance between Kim's group and the Yanan Koreans. Once the Soviet troops were gone, Kim and his allies brought the CCF Koreans back.⁹⁸

Because of their small number and relatively less prestigious experiences, Kim Il Sung's group had to dominate key posts of the KPA while they slowly came to dominate key posts of the party and administration. Kim Il Sung excluded Mu Jong and his men from the key posts of the KPA, and continuously sought to prevent returned veterans from China in 1949 and 1950 from obtaining the important positions of the KPA. Mu Jong became the commander of the artillery forces, which was a disgraceful position to a former supreme commander of the KVA and a former commanding general hero of the CCP forces in the fields of Long March. Because

⁹⁸ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War Volume 2*, 365.

of this political struggle, Kim Il Sung wanted to make his men the key leaders in the institutions of the KPA. He used the new youth elites of the KPA to spread propaganda and heroic stories of Kim Il Sung's time in Manchuria. Kim Il Sung made these passionate youths of the KPA his children. All leading positions of the KPA's academy and military training institution went to Kim Il Sung's group, and technical positions went to the Soviet-Korean group, who had much technological knowledge and experiences on the workings of the modern Soviet army. The Soviets had continuously supported Kim Il Sung from 1945 to 1950 against two groups: the Yeonan group, which had close ties to the CCP, and the domestic communists group, who were more nationalistic and less welcoming to the Soviets. The Soviets saw the Soviet-Koreans as technicians and administrators, not as future leaders of the DPRK. Under these conditions, Kim's group started to take the initiative to create the army and to design it along Soviet lines. Kim Il Sung emphasized his heroic guerilla activities and a revolutionary tradition of the KPA from his experience in Manchuria:

An armed force like Yeonan and returned veterans from China would be a threat to any political leadership. It is fascinating to see how Kim and his allies retained control at the commanding heights. One aspect has already been mentioned: the oaths of loyalty not just to the DPRK but to Kim, on penalty of people's court retribution, and the quartering of officer recruits in Kim's birthplace, thus bringing CCF officers to graduate via 'the bosom of the Fatherly Leader.' One of Kim's technique has been figuratively to preside over a paternal, intense rearing and education of selected young Koreans at or near his birthplace, especially party and military trainees and orphans of perished guerrillas and army officers. They all become, in effect, his children, thus drawing upon the deep wells of filial obligation bred into Koreans, but transferring them from the family to Kim, and thence to the state.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 365

There was the tensions between the factions of early North Korean politics. Soviet diplomats and military officers were well aware that the rivalry between the factions and it presented a grave threat to the new regime's political stability.¹⁰⁰

Three Core Groups of the KPA: Kim Il Sung's Group

Members of Kim's group had engaged in the anti-Japanese guerilla warfare in Manchuria in the 1930's. After the Japanese occupied Manchuria in 1931, the CCP began to organize a united anti-Japanese front among Chinese and Korean youth communists in Manchuria. The Chinese Yang Jingyu organized the First Division of the First Army of the North-East People's Revolutionary Army (NEPRA) in September 1933, and most of the anti-Japanese armed formations in Manchuria were integrated into the North-East Anti-Japanese United Army (NEAJUA) in February 1936. Historians disagree over the actual strength of the NEAJUA, but most believe it never exceeded 15,000 men and women at its peak. The NEAJUA expanded into eleven armies and regrouped into three route armies. In this army, a division was battalion size with 300 men and an army was regiment size unit with 1,000 men. Ch'oe Yong-gon, Yi Hak-man, and Ho Hyong-sik were Koreans who commanded the army, and about six Koreans were division commanders. About ten Koreans were political commissars of an army or a division or a regiment. Kim Il Sung was a commander of the 6th Division of the 2nd Army. Some units of the NEAJUA, including Kim's unit, infiltrated northern Korea across the Yalu River. Kim's unit successfully attacked a Japanese office of Pochonbo in June 1937 and this campaign became an

¹⁰⁰ Andrei Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea, 1945-1960* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 88.

enormous political asset to Kim because his name became famous from this successful battle. Yu Sung Chul, who was veteran of the Soviet Army during the WW2, the former three star general of the KPA and later freed to Soviet Union from North Korea, remembers that Kim Il Sung's original name was Kim Song Ju and he was one of the guerrilla forces. According to Yu, the original Kim Il Sung was killed during Pochonbo battle. Yu remembers that because Kim Song Ju changed his name to Kim Il Sung after original Kim Il Sung's dead in Pochonbo, Kim Song Ju (later Kim Il sung) largely benefitted from the reputation of the famous battle.¹⁰¹ Yu might have wanted to blame everything on Kim Il Sung after his escape from North Korea. After this battle, the Japanese Imperial Army launched a massive campaign against the NEAJUA and the NEAJUA suffered a fatal defeats. Kim Il Sung and many Korean communists of the NEAJUA fled from Manchuria and moved to the Soviet Union by January 1941.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ "Biography of Yu Sung Chol" in *The Biographies of Soviet Korean Leaders*, The Library of Congress, 8-9 accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/asian/SovietKorean.html> (accessed March 1, 2015).

¹⁰² Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 26-29.

First Route Army		Commander-in-Chief: Yang Jingyu
First Army	Commander: Yang Jingyu; Political Commissar: Yi Hong-gwang	
	First Division	Commander: Cheng Pin
	Second Division	Commander: Cao Guoan
	Third Division	Commander: Chen Hanzhang
Second Army	Commander: Chu Chin, Wang Detai; Political Commissar: Wei Zhengmin	
	Fourth Division	Commander: An Pong-hak; Choe Hyon
	Fifth Division	Commander: Fang Zhensheng
	Sixth Division	Commander: Kim Il Sung
Second Route Army		Commander-in-Chief: Zhou Bozhong
Fourth Army	Commander: Wang Delin, Li Yenlu; Political Commissar: Huang Yuqing	
	First Division	Commander: Li Yangping
	Second Division	Commander: Zou Youyan
	Third Division	Commander: Guo Fude
Fifth Army	Commander: Zhou Bozhong; Political Commissar: Song Yifu	
	First Division	Commander: Ping Nayang
	Second Division	Commander: Fu Xianming
	Third Division	Commander: Guo Fude
Seventh Army	Commander: Yi Hak-man; Political Commissar: Choe Yong-gon	
Eighth Army	Commander: Xie Wendong; Political Commissar: Liu Shuhua	
Tenth Army	Commander: Wang Yachen	
Third Route Army		Commander-in-Chief: Zhao Shangzhi
Third Army	Commander: Zhao Shangzhi; Political Commissar: Feng Zhongyun, Kim Chaek	
	First Division	Commander: Zhao Shangzhi
	Second Division	Commander: Li Xishan
	Third Division	Commander: Li Fulin
	Fourth Division	Commander: Shi Guilin
	Fifth Division	Li Zhaolin
Sixth Army	Commander: Xia Yunjie, Political Commissar: Chang Shoujian	
	First Division	Commander: Xia Yunjie
	Second Division	Commander: Feng Zhingang
	Third Division	Commander: Chang Chuanfu
Ninth Army	Commander: Li Huatang	
Eleventh Army	Commander: Qi Zhizhong	

Table 2: Leadership of the NEAJUA from 1936 to 1941¹⁰³¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 20.

The Second Army was mainly Koreans because it was based in the Chientao area of Manchuria, where many more Koreans had lived than Chinese. Kim Il Sung had a position as the commander of the 6th division of the 2nd Army and Ch'oi Yong-gon held the position of political commissar of the 7th Army. Kim Ch'aek was the political commissar of the 3rd Army. Ch'oi Yong-gon and Kim Ch'aek held higher positions than Kim Il Sung. They continued to hold higher positions than Kim Il Sung in the Soviet 88th Special Brigade. Kim Il Sung and his colleagues, including Ch'oi Yong-gon, Kim Ch'aek, Ch'oe Hyon, An Kil and Kang kon, shared the harsh experiences in this United Army from 1936 in Manchuria to 1945 in the Soviet Union's 88th special brigade. They fought together, ate together and camped together. They were family and brothers. Suh argues that no other political factions were as strongly united as Kim Il Sung's colleagues at this time¹⁰⁴. Suh explains that the top leadership of the United Army, including most of the Korean partisans, was held primarily by the Chinese Communists. Koreans were concentrated in the Second Army because it operated in eastern Manchuria, where Koreans had emigrated and settled for a long time. In this region, Koreans outnumbered the Chinese. In this Second Army, Kim Il Sung began his armed guerilla activities.¹⁰⁵

At that time, the Korean population in Manchuria had increased because they wanted to be free from Imperial Japanese pressure in Korea. In particular, more than half of the population in the Chientao area of Manchuria located close to the Northern part of Korea were Koreans. The following tables is the Korean population in Manchuria and in the Chientao area.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 156

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 21.

1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
431,198	459,427	488,656	515,865	528,027	531,857	531,973	542,185
1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934
558,280	577,052	597,677	607,119	630,982	672,649	673,794	719,988

Table 3: Korean Population in Manchuria¹⁰⁶

	Koreans	Chinese
1910	109,500	33,500
1912	163,000	49,000
1916	203,426	60,896
1921	307,806	73,748
1926	356,016	86,347
1931	395,847	120,394

Table 4: Population in Chientao of Manchuria¹⁰⁷

As the tables of Korean population in Manchuria shows, this concentrated population influenced the active participation of Koreans to fight against the Japanese army. This solidarity led to the emergence of the 2nd army of NEAJUA in which most Korean people held commander positions. It also led to Kim Il Sung's 6th Division of the 2nd Army, NEAJUA, where he held the commanding position. Some of these Korean communists became members of the Soviet Union's 88th Special Brigade, and they later formed Kim Il Sung's group. The Soviets created the 88th Special Brigade, most of whose soldiers were freed Chinese and Korean communists from Manchuria, because they needed Korean and Chinese people who knew the terrains and geography of Manchuria and the potential the enemy, the Japanese Army. Kim Il Sung and his colleagues spent their time from 1941 to 1945 in the Soviet Union before coming back to Korea.

¹⁰⁶ Robert Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part One*, 139. ; Division of Advisors, Department of Defense, Manchukuo, *Manshu kyosanhi no kenkyu (A Study of Communist Insurgents in Manchuria)*, (no place of publication, 1937), 513-514.

¹⁰⁷ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part One*, 138. ; Department of Defense, Manchukuo, *Manshu kyosanhi no kenkyu*, 543.

Kim Il Sung became a Soviet Captain and a battalion commander during this time. Under Japanese pressure, guerilla units and forces were destroyed. The Japanese plan to attack guerilla forces in Manchuria can be divided into three time periods: the first period, 1932.3 – 1933.9, the second period, 1933.10 – 1936.10, and the third period, 1936-10 – end. The second period was when Japanese forces adopted a conciliatory policy but the third period was a bloody, armed crackdown.¹⁰⁸ The Japanese by 1940 had won the insurgency wars.¹⁰⁹ The following tables is the Korean commanders of NEAJUA, later became the KPA's key posts.

Name	Position of the NEAJUA	Position of the DPRK
Ch'oe Yong-gon	Commander, the 7 th Army	Minister of National Defense (1948-1957) and Head of State (Symbolic) (1957-1972)
Kim Ch'aek	Political Commissar, the 3 rd Army	Commander in Chief, the Front Command (1950) and Deputy premier (1947-1951)
Kim Il Sung	Commander, the 6 th Division of the 2 nd Army	Supreme Commander (1950-), Premier (1946-1972) and Head of State (all powerful) (1972-)
Ch'oe Hyon	Commander, the 5 th Division of the 2 nd Army	Minister of National Defense (1968-1976)
An Kil	Political Commisar, the 14 th Regimnet of the 2 nd Army	Chief of the General Staff (1946-1947)
Kang Kon	Political Commissar, the 9 th Regiment of the 5 th Army	Chief of the General Staff (1947-1950)

Table 5: Korean Commanders of the NEAJUA¹¹⁰

In October 1940, the first route army of the NEAJUA was almost destroyed. Kim Il Sung's 2nd army escaped to the Soviet Union. The 2nd army built two separate camps, but

¹⁰⁸ 이덕일, "연해주의 소련 극동적군 88 여단의 결성배경과 성격," *한국근현대사연구* 6 (1997), 163-164.

¹⁰⁹ 이종석, "북한 지도집단과 항일투쟁", in *해방전후사의 인식*, ed. 김남식 (서울: 한길사, 1989), 5: 64, 163.

¹¹⁰ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 26.

enlisted with the Soviet Union in July 1942. The North Camp had 158 men and the South Camp had 114 men. The Soviets appointed the former commander of the Second Route Army, the Chinese Zhou Bozhong, as Major and the commander of the new unit, the 88th Special Brigade. Kim Il Sung was promoted to captain and given the post of battalion commander of the first battalion. On 1 August 1942, the organization of the 88th Special Brigade was created as a Soviet unit. Deputy positions in this brigade went to Soviet officers.

Interestingly, Lim Un, one of the participants of the 88th Special Brigade, remembered the details of the unit history. Kim Il Sung spent his Soviet years from 1941 to 1945 under the name Kim Yong-hwan. When Kim and his men entered the USSR, they were then transferred to the Reconnaissance Bureau (headed by Major-General Zolkin) under the direct command of the Far Eastern Front, commanded by General of the Army I.P. Apanasenko. At that time, the Reconnaissance Bureau decided to set up a training camp for Chinese and Korean partisans at a village called Biyak, where was located about 20 miles from Khabarovsk and one mile from the river Amur. The Reconnaissance Bureau named the troop at Biyak the 88th Special Brigade and this brigade had 100 Chinese, 60 Koreans and 40 Russian soldiers and it consisted of four battalions. According to Van Rhee, the ex-partisans were considered suitable guides in the border area of the USSR and Manchuria and competent soldier.¹¹¹

In the 88th Special Brigade, about sixty to one hundred Koreans existed and twenty were women. The military capability of this brigade was not strong. The Soviets needed this brigade for reconnaissance and infiltration because Chinese and Korean people knew the terrain and geography of Manchuria and the Japanese army very well. The first training for the unit was

¹¹¹ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 30-31.

parachute training. The members of the brigade had eight hours of training, including firing, throwing hand grenades, and signal training. Some officers of the brigade went to ski and camp training, 100 km from the main camp of the brigade. In general, the main mission of this unit was intelligence operation because of its small size.¹¹² The 88th Special Brigade's duties was performing reconnaissance for the Far Eastern Front. So, the soldiers of this unit were specially trained for this purpose. Their routine duty included a combat training every day and political lessons twice a week. From 1941 to 1945, this unit carried out missions to watch movement of the Japanese by the use of small unit or squad action. The soldiers penetrated deep behind enemy lines alone or in squads of four to five men, and communicated the movements of the enemy by radio. They sometimes concealed themselves for a long period behind enemy lines and it was not a strange mission to ex-partisans. For the Soviet Commander of the Far Eastern Command, this unit was a reconnaissance unit. For ex-partisan, they hoped that this unit could work for their homeland's independence from the Japanese and restore relations with the remnants of the NEAJUA in Manchuria.¹¹³

Therefore, this brigade was not an institution for future government or party of North Korea but a typical reconnaissance troop. The Soviets regarded Koreans in the brigade not as future leader candidates of Korea but as useful reconnaissance soldiers who knew the terrain and geography of Manchuria and Northern Korea. At that time, the Soviet Union was extremely busy fighting against the German Army. Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Japan in 1941. The Soviets' interest was not in the Far Eastern area. Stalin was very hesitant to join the attack on Japan before the collapse of Germany. When Churchill pushed Stalin to invade Japan as soon as

¹¹² 이종석, “북한 지도집단과 항일투쟁”, 181-184.

¹¹³ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 31-32.

possible, Stalin did not agree before the end of war against Germany. Stalin reluctantly agreed with British and American continuous requests to attack Japan when he received a promise of massive support from America in the Far East region. Therefore, Stalin's Korea diplomacy before 1945 did not exist, although Stalin was generally interested in ice-free ports for the Soviet Navy and some straits toward Pacific Sea in the area of North East Asia. Therefore, the scholars' arguments that the Soviet Union planned to make Kim Il Sung a leader of Korea by educating him are not substantiated. The Soviets assessed Kim Il Sung as a good soldier but not more than that before the victory against Japan in 1945. On 14 August 1944, the report from Political Commissar of the 88th Special Brigade V.E. Silrokin to Political Commissar of the Far Eastern Command P.T. Lukashin stated that Kim Il Sung and other Chinese people had successfully learned the Russian language. Moreover, Kim Il Sung had a good reputation among Korean soldiers in Korean units. And among the Korean people, Kim Il Sung, Ch'oi Yong-gon and Kim Ch'aek had good reputation. Among these leaders, Kim Il Sung had direct subordinates, while Ch'oi Yong-gon and Kim Ch'aek were political commissars.

The following first table show the positions of the unit. Ch'oe Yong-gon, Kim Il Sung, Kim Ch'aek and An Gil of the NEAJUA held the significant positions of the 88th Special Brigade and later became the KPA's key positions. The second table shows the positions of Kim Il Sung's group in the 88th Special Brigade and their positions of the KPA.

Brigade	Commander	Zhou Bozhong (Chinese)	
	Deputy Commander	Sirinski (Russian)	
	Chief of Staff	Shamarchenko (Russian)	
	Deputy Chief of Staff	Ch'oe Yong-gon (Korean)	
	Political Commissar	Silrokin (Russian)	
	Deputy Political Commissar	Jang su-cheon (Chinese)	
	1 st Battalion	Commander	Kim Il Sung (Korean)
		Deputy Commander	Marishev (Russian)
		Political Commissar	An Kil (Korean)
	2 nd Battalion	Commander	Wang Hyo-myong (Chinese)
		Deputy Commander	Adamov (Russian)
		Political Commissar	Kang Kon (Korean)
	3 rd Battalion	Commander	Heo Hyong-sik (Korean)
		Deputy Commander	Shaponizik (Russian)
		Political Commissar	Kim Ch'aek (Korean)
	4 th Battalion	Commander	Si Se-young (Chinese)
		Deputy Commander	Zirenov (Russian)
		Political Commissar	Gye Chong (Chinese)

Table 6: Organization of the 88th Special Brigade¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴이종석, “북한 지도집단과 항일투쟁”, 100. ; 이덕일, “연해주의 소련 극동적군 88 여단의 결성배경과 성격,” 178.

Name	Position of the 88 th Special Brigade	Position of the DPRK
Ch'oe Yong-gon	Brigade Political Commissar	Minister of National Defense (1948-1957)
Kim Il Sung	Battalion Commander	Supreme Commander (1950-)
Kang Kon	Battalion Commander	Chief of the General Staff (1947-1950)
Kim Ch'aek	Battalion Political Commissar	Commander-in-Chief, the Front Command (1950)
An Kil	Battalion Political Commissar	Chief of the General Staff (1946-1947)
Kim Il	Company Commander	Director of the Cultural (Political) Training Bureau (1946-1950)
Kim Kwang-hyop	Company Commander	Minister of National Defense (1957-1962)
Ch'oe Hyon	Company Commander	Minister of National Defense (1968-1976)
Choe Yong Jin	Company Commander	Army Corps Commander (1950)
So Chol	Company Political Commissar	Chief of the General Political Bureau (1958-1960)
Choe Kwang	Platoon Leader	Chief of the General Staff (1963-1969, 1988-)
Yi Yong Ho	Platoon Leader	Army Corps Commander (1950)
Yu Kyong Su	Platoon Leader	Army Corps Commander (1950)
Ho Bong Hak		Platoon Leader; later Chief of the General Political Bureau (1960-1967)

Table 7: Key Players of the KPA from the 88th Special Brigade¹¹⁵

The 88th Special Brigade planned to join Operation August Storm. For a successful mission, members of this unit conducted military and planning exercises. Their mission was to move to Manchuria and support a partisan battle against the Japanese army. One hundred men planned to infiltrate as a parachute unit in a rear area of the Japanese forces. This plan was made by the brigadier commander Zhou Bozhong and approved by the Soviet Far Eastern Command. On 9 August, Zhou Bozhong gave his directive to members of the brigade. On 11 August, the unit moved to the river of Amur and the ship arrived on 13 August. However, the Far Eastern Command ordered them to wait there and the war ended. Members of the brigade were passionately about moving forward with this mission, but the Soviets wanted to avoid any

¹¹⁵ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 30.

possible conflict against Chinese Nationalists by using the 88th Special Brigade because the Soviet Union signed the treaty with Chinese Nationalists that stated they will govern a restored territory of Japan. When the war ended, there were a total of 1354 men in this brigade. In terms of ethnic and nation, Russians and Russian minority ethnics were 878 men. Chinese were 373 men. Koreans were 103 men, including the former NEAJUA 88 members and 15 Soviet Koreans. Soldiers of the brigade were assigned their missions from the Soviet Union. Chinese people were assigned to a mission in China and Korean people were assigned to a mission in Korea. The first battalion of the brigade was assigned to Korea and its commander was Kim Il Sung.¹¹⁶ The political commissar was Ch'oi Yong-gun. The brigadier commander Zhou Bozhong and Chief of Staff Shirinski decided details of soldiers' assignment between 16 and 24 of August.¹¹⁷ This assignment order included the future place for a mission. There was no mission place for all women soldiers. Passion of the Korean mission group was very high, but their mission was cancelled.

The members of Kim Il Sung's group shared harsh conditions and had an unforgettable time as one team. Their brotherhood, fellowship and a loyalty were stronger than their rival group because they were a family, brothers and sisters, who had overcome extreme difficulties in Manchuria during the 1930's and in the Soviet Union during the 1940's. This sense of community and fellowship led to the idea of a family state and a parenthood of Kim Il Sung in the DPRK's propaganda. Kim Il Sung married one of his revolutionary colleagues, Kim Jong-

¹¹⁶기광서, "1940년대 전반 소련군 88 독립보병여단 내 김일성 그룹의 동향," *역사와 현실* 28 (1998): 275-280. ; 이덕일, 기광서, Wada Haruki and Chong-seok Lee's articles and books are well researched about the time of the 88th Special Brigade. In particular, Wada Haruki's *김일성과 만주항일전쟁* include much details of the story. See 와다 하루키, *김일성과 만주항일전쟁* (서울: 창작과 비평사, 1992)

¹¹⁷기광서, "1940년대 전반 소련군 88 독립보병여단 내 김일성 그룹의 동향," 282-284.

suk, and had three children. The first one was born on February 16, 1942 and this son was given the Russian nick name Yura and Korean name Kim Jong Il. The second son was named Shura, Kim Pyong Il and he was born in 1944. The second son drowned in a swimming accident in July 1947 in Pyongyang and Kim Jong-suk also died on September 22, 1949, in Pyongyang while delivering a stillborn baby. She was called Vera by the generals of the Soviet occupation forces in Pyongyang and her statue was erected not as wife of Kim Il Sung or mother of Kim Jong Il but as a Korean revolutionary.¹¹⁸ The final will of Kim Jong-suk to her colleagues was to make her oldest son, Kim Jong-il, a successor of Kim Il Sung. Because of this strong tie and brotherhood, her colleagues, who became the elites of the party, the military and the government, supported Kim Jong Il as a successor of Kim Il Sung against a popular and well-respected candidate, Kim Pyong-il, another son of Kim Il Sung. All members of Kim Il Sung's group became the elites of the DPRK, and in particular, became the elites of the military at the early stage of the DPRK. Due to the strong bonds built in the 1930's and early 1940's, Kim Il Sung's group became a family and they created the concept of the family state. In this conception of the family state, Kim Il Sung was a beloved father and mother and his people were the children of Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung fed people and took care of people, and people followed Kim Il Sung's instruction as his children. This was not only from the Confucian tradition and the Japanese Emperor's cultural influence, but also from the strong brotherhood of Kim Il Sung's group.¹¹⁹

Most of Kim Il Sung's group stayed together in the Special 88th Brigade of the Soviet Union and they became key members of the KPA. They not only shared guerilla experiences as the part of NEAJUA but also watched the most powerful modern ground forces fully and rapidly

¹¹⁸ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 51-52.

¹¹⁹ Charles Armstrong see the North Korean revolution was influenced by not only Soviet Marx-Leninism but also Confucianism culture. See *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*.

destroy their long-time enemy, the Japanese. As participants in Operation August Storm, Kim Il Sung's group was strongly influenced by the Soviet Union's most successful operation with large mechanized forces. Two conflicting visions of war, the Maoistic People's War and the Soviet modern mechanized operation, were the foundation of Kim Il Sung's group's vision of war, and this vision was the ideal model for the KPA. Korea has always been a melting pot of different cultures. Thus, the KPA finally merged those two visions and created their own vision of war by adding their harsh experiences in Manchuria and the Soviet Union. This was also a process of acculturation between two different cultures, the Soviet Union and China. Kim Il Sung's experiences in China and the Soviet Union from 1931 to 1945 significantly influenced their vision for the KPA. Because many Korean population lived in eastern Manchuria, Kim Il Sung naturally conducted his guerilla operations in eastern Manchuria. In particular, Pochonbo near border between China and North Korea (South Eastern part of the map) was the most significant battle site for Kim Il Sung's reputation among Koreans. His experience in that region from 1931 to 1945 naturally shaped his vision for the KPA from 1945 to 1950.

How the small Kim Il Sung's group won the political struggle for a leadership in North Korea is an interesting question. Among many organized Korean independence groups outside of Korea, none of them entered the country with the liberators. There was no group operating in either the US or the Soviet Union. The Korean Provisional Government (KPG), including Kim Gu, had its military unit by working with the Chinese Nationalists in China, but Chinese Nationalists did not come and occupy Korea. The long term Korean communist groups had no formal ties or efficient relationship with the Soviet Union. Kim Il Sung's group was only one group who actually operating with occupation forces, the Soviet Union. Although Kim Il Sung's group was much smaller than its political rivals in South and North Korea, such as Korean

Communists and the KPG, and Kim's group did not have any foundation in Korea before 1945, Kim Il Sung's group had two crucial elements for a political victory in North Korea. Kim's group had the Soviet Union's support and there was no powerful political group in North Korea. Most of major prominent political leaders were in Seoul and fought each other for political hegemony. During the Soviet occupation of three years and four months from 1945 August, Kim successfully carried out Soviet directives and put himself in a leadership position by controlling his opposition. Kim Il Sung created a new party, a new government and a new army.¹²⁰

Kim Il Sung's group members were basically warriors, not intellectuals of Communism. Even though they had small numbers, their power of unity was stronger than any other political faction. They knew that they had to have military and security power to gain political hegemony from their experiences in Manchuria and the Soviet Union. Their sense of reality made them dominate all key positions of the army and security forces first. Kim Il Sung and his group started to make their own army under their vision of war. Their vision came from their experiences in Manchuria and the Soviet Union. Making the army was their dream come true.

Three Core Groups of the KPA: The Yeonan Group

The Yeonan group was the North China Independence League and the KVA. The Independence League and the KVA were an assembly of left-wing Koreans who had a close tie with the CCP. They had engaged in communist activities from the early 1920's, when the Independence League was led by senior Korean communists. The KVA soldiers were the youths

¹²⁰ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 55-57.

who had anti-Japanese guerilla experiences in the late 1930's. The KVA was incorporated into the KPA after 1945 and the Independence League played political roles in North Korea. Kim Won Bong organized the Korean Volunteer Corps (KVC) and was a leader of the Korean National Revolutionary Party in Hankow, China in October 1938. From July 1937, the KVC came into being under the Military Committee of the Chinese Nationalist Government. The KVC had 140 men and they mostly graduated from Xingzi Military Academy in Nanking. The KVC conducted psychological warfare and intelligence activities.

After independence in 1945, the KPA naturally emerged from the public security units. The first commanders of these units either had had many experiences as guerilla forces in Manchuria or China, or were Russianized Koreans with long experiences in the Soviet Union. A few officers from the Japanese Army were also hired¹²¹. The KVC became the KVA in July 1941 in Jinnandong, Shanxi Province. Mu Jong was named the Commander of the KVA and Pak Il-u, later Minister of the Interior of North Korea, was appointed Political Commissar. Pak Hyo-sam, former commander of the 2nd Branch of the KVC, was appointed the Chief of the Staff. The KVA had around 1,000 men in August 1945, 2,500 men by September 1945 and 4,000 men by November 1945. The Soviets' request for disarmament prevented the KVA from returning to Korea. Because of this, most mid-ranking cadres of the KVA were to return to North Korea much later with the expansion scheme of the KPA.¹²² The following table show the positions of Yeoan group people in the KPA.

¹²¹ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 2*, 923.

¹²² Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 33-36.

Name	Position
Mu Jong	Deputy Defense Minister (1946-1950)
Pak Il-u	Minister of the Interior (1946-1952)
Kim Ung	Commander-in-Chief, the Front Command (1951)
Pang Ho-san	Army Corps Commander (1950)
Yi Kwon-mu	Army Corps Commander (1950)
Kim Chang Dok	Army Corps Commander (1950)
Pak Hun Il	Commander, the Security Forces (1950)
Wang Yon	Commander of the Air Forces (1950)
Chang Pyong San	Delegate to the Armistice Talks (1951)
Yi Sang Jo	Delegate to the Armistice Talks (1951)

Table 8: Key Players of the KPA from the Yeonan faction¹²³

Although the cadres of the KPA had better social and educational backgrounds than the Kim Il Sung's group, Kim Il Sung firmly excluded them from key positions of the KPA because Kim's people dominated those key positions.¹²⁴ Kim Il Sung's men dominated all key positions of the KPA. The minister of national defense was Kim explains Ch'oe Yong-gon, the vice-minister was Kim Il, and the commander-in-chief of the KPA was Kang Kon, They were all Kim Il Sung's people. The KPA had approximately 60,000 men divided into three army divisions by 1949. All commanding positions of three divisions went to Kim Il Sung's men. The First Division was commanded by Ch'oe Kwang, the Second Division by Ch'oe Hyon, and the Third Division by Kim Kwang-hyop. They were all guerilla fighters from the United Army and were loyal to Kim Il Sung.¹²⁵

Mu Jong was a potential rival of the Yeonan group against Kim Il Sung with Ho Ka-i of the Soviet-Korean group and Park Hon-young of the domestic Communist group. Kim Il Sung strongly excluded Mu Jong and the Yeonan group. Mu Jong was serving as second secretary of

¹²³ *Ibid*, 37.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 37-38.

¹²⁵ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 102-103.

the North Korean Communist Party, in charge of personnel. This was a tremendously important position, and one that Mu Jong and his faction no doubt hoped to utilize in catapulting him to power. However, Kim Il Sung and the Soviet Union had a same interest for deterring a political and military power of pro-Chinese Korean group. The Soviet Union did not allow Korean forces coming from Manchuria to enter North Korea armed when Korea was liberated in 1945. The forces were anti-Japanese guerilla forces and they were heroes to Korean people because of their reputation and heroic activities for a long time in Manchuria and mainland China. However, because of this, the Yeonan group and Mu Jong significantly lost a power. After all, when the KPA was formally inaugurated, on February 8, 1948, most of the key positions went to men close to Kim Il Sung and Soviet authorities. When the Yeonan man got a major appointment, a Kim Il Sung or Soviet man was usually directly above or below him.¹²⁶

Suh Dong-man, the North Korean studies scholar and the former Chief of Staff of the National Intelligence Office (NIE) of South Korea, demonstrates that Kim Il Sung's group led the creation of the KPA with Soviet support. Although Kim Il Sung's group had a small number of key posts of the Korean Worker's Party, they kept key positions of the KPA. The senior level officers of the KPA had two main roots: the Kim Il Sung's group and the KVA, with a small number of Soviet-Korean technicians.¹²⁷ Andrei Lankov shows a slightly different political geography of early DPRK via a memory of Kovyzenko, who was working in the Political administration of the Soviet 25th Army at that time:

Kovyzenko begins his memorandum with a general review of the situation. He mentions the four factions in North Korea: (1) former underground activists headed by Pak Hon-young; (2) guerrilla-emingrants returned from China and led by Kim Il Sung, Ch'oe Yong-gon and Mu Chong; (3) Soviet Koreans; and (4)

¹²⁶ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part 2*, 927.

¹²⁷ 서동만, *북조선사회주의 체제성립사 1945-1961*(Seoul: 선인, 2005), 274.

emigrants-intellectuals returned from China and headed by Kim Tu-bong. Kovyzenko did not classify Kim Il Sung and his guerrillas as belonging to the Soviet faction as had long been the practice among foreign observers. At the same time he considered Mu Chong as belonging to the Guerrilla faction.¹²⁸

Many Korean scholars have not supported the assertion of Kovyzenko, Kim Il Sung and Mu Jong as one faction, but Kim Il Sung and Mu Jong shared common experiences as anti-Japanese guerilla soldiers in Manchuria. While Kim Il Sung kept his eyes on the rise of the Yeonan group on the KPA, he recruited many former Korean people in Manchuria. Ironically, Kim Il Sung also was one member of the CCP but his move to the Soviet Union changed his close tie with the CCP, rather than with Yeonan group. Kim explains that The Cadres of the Korean Volunteer Army were invaluable assets in the making of the KPA. These cadres were not welcome in Soviet-dominated North Korea. However, the Soviet authority and Kim Il Sung were intent to make use of manpower and experience of the KVA in the making and running of the KPA. Therefore, more than 30 men from the KVA attained the rank of Major-General or above in the KPA by the mid-1950s.¹²⁹

Many Korean veterans returned from the Chinese Civil War to North Korea and the important positions within the KPA. This army had historical roots in the KVA and the Yeonan faction. Their battle experiences were instrumental to the operational success of the early stage Korean War. Without their return, Kim Il Sung could not have started the Korean War, and modern Korean history would be totally different. Among them, Yi Kwon-mi and Pang Ho-san were the most significant divisional commanders of the KPA and became army corps commanders. Kim Ung was an army corps commander and Pak Il-u was appointed Deputy Commander of the Sino-Korean Combined Forces in late 1950. However, Mu Jong, who was a

¹²⁸ Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 88-89.

¹²⁹ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 37.

leader of the Yeonan group and a protégé of the CCP, was too proud to be a subordinate of Kim Il Sung. Under the dominance of the Soviet power, he became the first victim of Kim Il Sung's purge in the late 1950. Mu Jong's position was Chief of the Artillery Training Bureau and the Deputy Defense Minister.¹³⁰

Members of the Yeonan group and of the KVA were core founding members of the KPA. Although Kim Il Sung and the Soviet authorities excluded the influence of the Yeonan group and the KVA over the KPA and North Korean politics, the KPA could not have successfully been established without them. Their valuable battle experiences ensured that the KPA's initial operation was successful.

Three Core Groups of the KPA: The Soviet Korean Group

The final group is the Soviet-Korean group. The Soviet-Koreans had commonality with Kim Il Sung's group because some of them shared time in the 88th Special Brigade. However, significant numbers of them did not share time with Kim Il Sung because they instead worked for the Soviet party, government or military.¹³¹ Suh demonstrates the difference between the Soviet-Korean group and Kim Il Sung's group, as well as a profile of the group:

The Soviet Korean group was not organized, and the returnees from the Soviet Union felt no need to maintain a common group identity. It is true that Kim Il Sung himself returned to Korea from the Soviet Union in 1945, and that his group had spent some four years in a camp near Khabarovsk in the Russian Maritime Province after being defeated in Manchuria. However, the partisans under Kim who had fought the Japanese as part of Chinese guerrilla army in Manchuria were fundamentally different from the Soviet Koreans, most of whom had been born and raised in the Soviet Union. The fact that both groups had returned to Korea from the Soviet Union with the Soviet occupation forces

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 37.

¹³¹ Few scholars researched the topic of Soviet-Koreans on North Korea. The following three books are valuable. See Suh Dae-sook's *Koreans in the Soviet Union*, Andrei Lankov's *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung* and Erik Van Rhee's *Socialism in One Zone*.

at first blinded even the most informed observers to the fact that these were two very different groups. Kim's partisans were Korean guerillas who had fought the Japanese under the most trying conditions in Manchuria, with the goal of achieving independence for Korea. The Soviet Koreans were Soviet citizens, the children of Korean immigrants to the Soviet Union who might have joined the Soviet army to defend the Soviet Union. None of them had participated directly in any armed struggle for Korean independence.¹³²

Ho Ka-i was a leader of this group but he was a party politician, not a military professional. Because of this, there was no significant representation of the Soviet-Korean group in the KPA. Because the Soviet-Koreans had valuable military experiences as Soviet soldiers in the Second World War, they contributed many things to the development of the KPA. The Soviet authorities saw them as Soviet citizens and soldiers, but they were not regarded as potential leaders of North Korea. Their main positions and jobs in the KPA were as instructors, teachers, technicians, translators, engineers and deputy commanders. Kim Il Sung did not see the Soviet-Koreans of the KPA as rivals, but as technocrats familiar with technology and knowledgeable about the modern Soviet army. These people were mostly descendants of Korean immigrants in the Soviet Union. By December of 1945, about eighty Soviet-Koreans returned to North Korea from Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan. They were mostly working in the party, government administration, or the military.¹³³ Lankov explains a profile of the Soviet-Korean group:

The Soviet faction included Soviet Koreans who were sent to the DPRK by the Soviet authorities in 1945-8. There was one significant difference between the Yanan and Soviet factions: while most Yanan exiles were born and grew up in Korea and only later moved to China, among the Soviet Koreans there were few recent arrivals in Russia. The reason was the Great Purge of 1937 when a majority of the politically active Korean emigrants to the Soviet Union were eliminated as 'Japanese spies'. Thus the Soviet faction consisted of people who had been born or at least grown up in the Soviet Union, had never been to Korea and had next to no contact with the country for most of their lives. In addition their knowledge of the Korean culture and occasionally even the language was

¹³² Suh Dae-sook, eds. *Koreans in the Soviet Union* (Honolulu, Hawaii: The University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 125.

¹³³ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 39.

somewhat limited in comparison to the intellectuals from Yenan or the Domestic faction. This, however, was partly compensated for by a generally good knowledge of Russian and Western cultures.¹³⁴

Name	Position of the KPA
Nam Il	Chief of the General Staff (1951-1953)
Kim Il	Deputy Chief, Cultural (Political) Training Bureau (1946-1950)
Yu Song Chol	Chief, the Operations Bureau (1949)
Pak Kil Nam	Chief, the Engineers Bureau (1949)
Kim Yol	Chief, the Rear Service Bureau (1950)
Yi Chun Baek	Chief, the Reconnaissance Bureau (1950)
Han Il Mu	Commander of the Navy (1950)
Kim Bong Yul	Commander of the Artillery Command (1951)
Ki Sok Bok	President of the Pyongyang Institute (1948-1950)
Kim Ung	General of the Army; Commander, North Korean frontline forces (1953)
Park Ui-wan	Major-General of the Army; Deputy Commander

Table 9: Key Players of the KPA from the Soviet-Korean faction¹³⁵

The table show the positions of the Soviet-Koreans in the KPA. Some members of the Soviet-Korean group had significant positions of the KPA because of their strength in technology. Allan Millett argues that the Soviet-Koreans had experience more valuable than Kim Il Sung group's guerilla activities:

Soviet-Koreans had valuable experience over Kim Il Sung's guerilla activities. Ho Ka-I was born in Russia in 1904 and a veteran revolutionary and party organizer in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Educated at Sverdlovsk's University of the Toilers of the East, Ho spoke Korean as a second language and preached Stalin's socialism with fervor in both Russian and Korean. Other Soviet Koreans used the Red Army as an avenue to preferment. Nam Il, who became a Korean People's Army general and negotiator at Panmunjom as well as director of a guerrilla war against the Republic of Korea, saw Berlin before he saw Seoul. Born in Korea but raised in Uzbekistan, Nam Il, aged thirty-two in 1945, graduated from a teachers college in Tashkent and then went immediately into the Red Army as an officer candidate at Smolensk Military School. He served as an officer continuously through the Second World War and participated in the battles for Stalingrad and Warsaw. He returned to the Far East to participate in

¹³⁴ Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 80.

¹³⁵ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 40.

the war with Japan and arrived in Korea for the first time as a major in the Red Army. Among his comrades in the Red Army were future senior generals of the Korean People's Army Kim Il and Yu Song Chol and six other flag officers of 1950, all of them in specialist-technical positions or key roles in the training and indoctrination commands.¹³⁶

The Soviet-Koreans were not numerous but their contribution to formation of the KPA and the DPRK was not small. In particular, they dominated the press, university, assembly, cabinet and diplomatic posts. Suh points out that the Soviet Koreans were prominent during the Soviet occupation of North Korea until the end of 1948. Because they were able to speak Russian, understand the occupation policy of the Soviet Union and they were graduates of colleges or high schools in the Soviet Union, they identified themselves with the occupation forces. Nonetheless, there was none nationally prominent figure because the Soviet Union was not a collective party or faction but an individual technocrat.¹³⁷

Their time in the Soviet Union was longer than Koreans in Manchuria and no less difficult than the harsh life there that Kim Il Sung experienced. Some of the Soviet-Koreans had a lower or mid-level ranking position in the Soviet communist party or sometimes in the army. Some of them were educated at the Soviet party political schools or military academies, and had been working as party officials or sometimes as army officers. In addition to the good education and ability of the Soviet-Korean group, they generally had a good relationship with Kim Il Sung's group because they shared time as colleagues in the 88th Special Brigade where Kim Il Sung held the position of battalion commander. Suh explains that the Soviet Koreans occupied many key posts in the party, military, government, news media and cadre training school and Ho Ka-I, the first secretary of the party, was the most influential Soviet-Korean. Many professors of

¹³⁶ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950*, 40.

¹³⁷ Suh, *Koreans in the Soviet Union*, 102-107.

Kim Il Sung University came from the Soviet Union and the editors of the party organs, newspapers and journals were also Soviet-Koreans.¹³⁸

The careers of those Soviet-Koreans were interesting because some fought against Nazi Germany as Soviet soldiers in European theater. They were not normally allowed to serve in the army after their deportation to Central Asia from the Far East around 1937, but these restrictions did not apply to Koreans who had lived in the region before 1937. Therefore, some ethnic Korean people had participated in the fight against the Germans. A few Soviet-Koreans, including Chong Sang-jin, a marine captain, participated as soldiers in the Soviet 25th Army, which defeated the Japanese forces in North Korea in August 1945. Among them, twelve Soviet Koreans were sent to Pyongyang, led by Major Mikhail Kang and Captain O Ki-chan.¹³⁹ Their main mission was communication between the Soviet military and locals by translating and interpreting, as well as issuing propaganda materials. Kang started to publish the Soviet owned Korean-language newspaper the *Choson sinmun*. Kang's group, including Cho Ki-chan and Chon Tong-hyok, who ran the Soviet army press company, was from the 7th department of the Soviet 25th Army. Although these Soviet-Koreans had little knowledge about Korea, their influence was increased because a lack of Korea-related expertise of Soviet military and civilian managers. As a result, the first year of the DPRK was known as the period under the rule of the Soviet interpreters. Mikhail Kang was the most important of these Soviet-Koreans from 1945-1946, the period of the rule of the Soviet interpreters. Because of the lack of qualified cadres,

¹³⁸ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 108.

¹³⁹ Mikhail Kang was one of the Koreans served in the Far East in the 7th sections of the political departments in various units, which were responsible for special propaganda (psychological warfare) among soldiers and civilians of the enemy, as well as in Soviet-occupied territory, and he later significantly influenced Soviet policy in Korea. Because Kang held the highest military rank of any Soviet Koreans, this was impressed the locals. From *Ibid*, 115-116.

Kim Il Sung began to petition the Soviet authorities to send more Soviet-Koreans to North Korea. Some Soviet-Koreans in Central Asia, who had a good education, including A. Il Hegai and Kang Sang-ho, were sent to North Korea. Some Soviet-Koreans who were transferred from the Soviet army to local administrative organizations retained Soviet citizenship until 1948, and were technically considered servicemen of the Soviet Army. They became Russian language teachers or civilian specialists for the party.¹⁴⁰ Millett explains:

The Red Army accepted Koreans as volunteers (officers and enlisted) in the war against facism. The coalition of Chinese and Korean Communists in Yanan and the remnants of the Shanghai Communist faction (Kim Won-bong) held the organizational initiative in fighting the complete Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931. The Soviet Koreans, however, had residual advantages: access to Soviet educational institutions and military training schools, experience in minor party administration, and training in operating state-owned industrial and transportation enterprise.¹⁴¹

Although their contribution in forming the DPRK was impressive, their political success was limited. Soviet-Koreans were generally not recognized as a rival group to Kim Il Sung, except in Ho Ga-I's individual challenge to the party. Their political influence was even less impressive than one would expect given their contributions for DPRK. Lankov explains the educational and professional background of the Soviet-Koreans group and their limitations to ascend in the DPRK:

In 1940 a military intelligence school near Moscow established a special year-long course exclusively for training officers from among Soviet Koreans. In 1942 the graduates of this course numbered six (it is unknown how many graduated in 1941). They were sent on secret missions to Korea and Manchuria, and most eventually found themselves in the 88th Secial Brigade, together with Kim Il Sung and his guerrillas. The most famous of these graduates was Yu Song-chol, later served as the head of operations of the North Korean General Staff. When in August 1945 Soviet troops entered the territory of North Korea, they found there only a few former Soviet Koreans, among whom ambitious and

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 115-119.

¹⁴¹ Millett, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950*, 34.

energetic Pak Chong-ae was by far the most notable. Later some other Soviet Koreans, who had earlier worked illegally in the South, also moved to the North, but even then the number of former Soviet agents and Comintern cadres in the DPRK elite remained very small and their role in North Korean national building was not very considerable.¹⁴²

For the making of the KPA, Soviet-Koreans played very important roles even though their numbers were far fewer than those of the Yeonan group. Their roles mainly were teachers, instructors, interpreters, technicians, engineers, and political commissars. Even so, their political influences were small. They lost more of their already small influence when the Soviets withdrew and did not return to fight for Korea during the Korean War.¹⁴³

Conclusion

Scholars have various opinions on the questions of how Kim won the political struggle against his competent and talented rivals. Kim Il Sung's group was not only small, but also uneducated and largely from low profile family backgrounds. The members also had poorer reputations than their prominent rivals, such as domestic communist leader Park Hun-young, nationalist leader Cho Man-sik, the Soviet-Korean communist Ho kai, and the Yeonan group leaders Mu Jong, Kim Won-bong, and Kim Tu-bong. Kim Il Sung won the political struggle for North Korean leadership not only because of his ability, luck, fortune, and fate, but also Soviet support. Kim Il Sung had skill, luck, fortune and timing to win the political struggle. Kim possessed the traits of ruthlessness and cruelty. A very substantial number of promising Communists ended their careers in prison or died before the struggle ended. Only small proportion of young Communist leader survived and Kim was one of them. However, the most important reason how young Kim became the leader of North Korea was the Soviet Union's

¹⁴² Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 115.

¹⁴³ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 108.

support. According to Scalapino and Lee, Kim Il Sung came into North Korea on the shoulders of Soviet power and anointed by Soviet authority.¹⁴⁴

Park Myong-lim recognizes that Kim Il Sung's group had a strong bond and brotherhood, while other groups did not have a pivotal figure like Kim Il Sung. Kim's important asset was devoted support from his senior partners, Ch'oi Yong-gon and Kim Ch'aek¹⁴⁵. Ch'oi yong-gon was twelve years older than Kim Il Sung and Kim Ch'eck was nine years older than Kim Il Sung. They held a much higher rank than Kim Il Sung in the same organizations for over a decade, including the NEAJUA and the 88th Special Brigade. They knew each other very well and their families were well-acquainted. Kim Il Sung was a younger brother and lower officer than them. Nonetheless, they never challenged Kim Il Sung's leadership position inside of Kim Il Sung's group. Kim Il Sung, Kim Ch'eck, and Ch'oi Yong-gon were three top leaders of Kim Il Sung's group and their brotherhood was much stronger than any other rival group.¹⁴⁶ Wada Haruki sees their relationship as a brotherhood or family, and explains their relationship like that of older brothers where Kim Ch'eck and Ch'oi Yong-gon yielded the leadership position of the group to younger brother Kim Il Sung in the way ordinary families sometimes did.¹⁴⁷ They shared harsh experiences in Manchuria and the Soviet Union over the course of a decade when they were young. This made them a family. They camped together, ate together and took care of each other as a guerilla family. They vividly remembered their colleagues who died and were

¹⁴⁴ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part I*, 228-229.

¹⁴⁵ Wada Haruki's book well explained the biographies of Choi Yong-gon and Kim Cheak. Choi Yonggon was born in 1900 and Kim Chaeck was born in 1903. They worked with Kim Il Sung in Manchuria and the Soviet Union for a decade and became the three leaders of the Kim Il Sung group with Kim Il Sung. Please see Ch'oi Yong-gon in the page 186-189 and Kim Ch'ack in the page 206-208 of 와다 하루키, *김일성과 만주항일전쟁* (서울: 창작과 비평사, 1992)

¹⁴⁶ 박명림, *한국 전쟁의 발발과 기원 2*, 264-266.

¹⁴⁷ 와다 하루키, *북조선 유격대국가에서 정규군국가로* (Seoul: 돌베개, 2002), 63.

wounded under the terrible conditions. They became strongly attached to each other. When Kim Ch'ek was killed at the initial stage of the Korean War in 1950, Kim Il Sung was deeply sad and built a memorial for him. When Ch'oi Yong-gon rejected Kim's invasion plan because of his concern of possible US intervention, Ch'oi was not purged by Kim Il Sung, rather Kim temporarily placed him as the commander of rear command. Ch'oi unsurprisingly easily came back to a high position in the cabinet and the party after the war. Kim Il Sung never showed his mercy except toward Ch'oi Yong-gon. Such mercy had been impossible for anyone except Ch'oi in North Korea. Kim certainly had survival ability. Moreover, the leaders of the Yeonan group did not ask for the assistance of the Chinese occupation forces, nor did the Chinese offer any help in the internal power struggle. According to Suh, there was no coalition to mount a combined attack against Kim. For instance, when the leaders of the domestic Communist group challenged Kim, the members of the Yeonan group abstained, and the Soviet-Koreans were on Kim's side in suppressing the domestic Communist group. When the Yeonan group challenged Ki, none of domestic group who had survived the purge joined them. So, no other groups was strongly united behind leader as the partisans were for Kim Il Sung. Kim's challengers were inefficient and unorganized. Kim Il Sung showed that he could survive even when he failed in the Korean War. The challenge of Kim's opponents was no match for his talent for survival. Nonetheless, Kim had also enjoyed the good fortune of Chinese intervention in the Korean War to save him and their noninterference in North Korean domestic politics. Suh concluded that if China supported pro-Chinese Korean group from Yeonan, Kim Il Sung would have a difficult time.¹⁴⁸ However, Suh's scenario is in low possibility, it is because Chinese were also

¹⁴⁸ Suh, *Kim Il Sung*, 155-157.

subordinate to the Soviet Union, who supported them with military equipment during the war and sometime after the war.

Kim Il Sung became the winner of political struggle for North Korean leadership for a variety of reasons, including luck, fortune, Soviet support, unorganized rivals, Chinese non-interference, and his ability to survive. The undeniable fact is that Kim Il Sung's domination of key posts of the army and security forces was the key factor for his winning a political leadership position. Kim Il Sung's group members vividly remembered their harsh time in Manchuria and recognized how much armed forces are important for survival. They knew that all power grows out from the barrel of a gun. In his report to Moscow, the Soviet ambassador to Pyongyang General Razubaev estimated Kim Il Sung as a man with poor knowledge of Marx-Leninist ideology; on the other hand, he estimated a domestic communist leader Park Hon-yong as a prominent Marx-Leninist intellectual. General Razubaev evaluated Kim Il Sung as a lazy student of Communist ideology but as a strong pro-Soviet person.¹⁴⁹ Although Kim Il Sung's group members were not intellectuals who knew Marx-Leninist ideology, the Soviet Union knew how this group could survive and become the winner of the political struggle. They were warriors, not intellectuals. They were realistic warriors, not idealistic communists. The Soviets were possibly more suspicious of devote Marxist intellectuals than non-intellectual and pragmatic soldiers. The Soviet Union knew that domestic communists in North and South Korea, including activities of

¹⁴⁹ Russia gave the reports of the Soviet Ambassador Razubaev during the Korean War from Russian national archives to the South Korean government in 2001. This mainly includes his reports to Moscow during the war on his evaluation and estimate on performances of the KPA and North Korean leadership. This was the very useful primary sources to understand the Russian views toward North Korean leadership and the performance of the KPA during the war. Few scholars use the sources and this only exists as English and Korean language. 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *소련 군사고문단장 라주바예프의 6.25 전쟁보고서 1* (서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001), 25-30.

Pak Hon-yong and the South Korean Workers' Party members in comintern international during the 1930's, were devote Marxist intellectuals. The Soviets worried about possible opposition of Korean communist leaders against the Soviets' influence over domestic politics. The Soviets purged Soviet-Koreans in 1937 and they were Marxist intellectuals not soldiers. The Soviet Union needed pro-Soviet warriors not devote Marxist intellectuals from North Korea.

The Soviet Union needed to create the KPA before their withdrawal for making a buffer zone's forces against potential future Japanese and US threats. Kim Il Sung's group wanted to create the army as quickly as possible for reasons including political survival and military adventure for unification. Their shared interest was a strong motivation to create the KPA quickly and successfully. The Soviet Union closely advised every process of building of the KPA and Kim Il Sung's group desperately needed their advice and guidance. This discussion shows how Kim Il Sung and his group quickly created the army with Soviet guidance and successfully dominated key posts of the army and security forces for their political victory inside North Korea and their military victory over South Korea.

4. The Soviet Union's War against the Japanese: Operation August Storm

Considering the revolutionary war as a whole, the operations of the people's guerrillas and those of the main forces of the Red Army complement each other like a man's right arm and left arm, and if we had only the main forces of the Red Army without the people's guerrillas, we would be like a warrior with only one arm. In concrete terms, and especially concerning military operations, when we talk of the people in the base area as a factor, we mean that we have an armed people. That is the main reason why the enemy is afraid to approach our base area.¹⁵⁰

- Mao Tse-tung, December 1936

Historically and geographically, Korean culture has been not a simple result of mechanical processes but a new result of chemical incorporation of different culture. The KPA was the result of an acculturation process involving the Soviet Union, China and Korea. The KPA was influenced by the Soviet material culture, Chinese culture influence, and Kim Il Sung's Korean vision for the KPA. Interestingly, this is similar to the development of the ROK Army, which was influenced by American material culture, Japanese cultural legacy and Korean officers' experiences during pre-1945 history. For the KPA, Chinese cultural influence was more significant than the Soviet material culture. The following three chapters will explain those three factors. Among them, this chapter will explain the Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA.

Kim Il Sung's group played a key role to create the KPA with Soviet material support and guidance. The Soviet guidance was very detailed, but this guidance was just a supporting role, not an order from Moscow. Stalin wanted to make a strong army for North Korea against a possible threat from the US and Japan. But, Kim Il Sung and his group had the initiative. During every conversation between Stalin and Kim Il Sung, including correspondences, letters and meetings in Moscow, Kim Il Sung always first asked and Stalin replied to his request. Stalin did

¹⁵⁰ "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" in *Selective Works*, eds. Mao Tse-tung (Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 1: 238.

not order Kim Il Sung, but helped him. Kim Il Sung took the initiative to create and develop the KPA. Therefore, Kim Il Sung's idea and passion were the most important factors in understanding the KPA. The three sources of influence on Kim Il Sung and his background as an explanation of the development of the KPA.

Human beings are not robot. Human beings have emotion, memories, psychological scar, honor, pride, vengeance, jealousy and sorrow. From his life experience and cultural influence, Kim Il Sung had same feelings. I argue that three significant events in the life of Kim Il Sung strongly influenced his vision for the KPA: the Minsaengdan incident, Kim's guerilla experience in the 1930's fighting with the Chinese, and his experience in the Soviet Union in the early 1940's. Each event, which caused some degree of psychological trauma for Kim Il Sung, directly influenced three distinctive features evident in the KPA: first, sovereignty and independence from the Minsaengdan incident; second, Chinese cultural influence; and finally, the Soviet material culture. Among them, I argue that Chinese influence was more significant than the Soviet material culture in shaping Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA because he had been a student of the Maoistic People's Army School for more than a decade and planned the Korean War as not the Soviet Deep Operation but Mao style revolutionary war and because Koreans have greater cultural affinity with the Chinese. Although Kim Il Sung admired modern Soviet material culture, especially from his experience during Operation August Storm in 1945, naturally his thinking and mind leaned toward Chinese culture. For instance, Kim Il Sung emphasized partisan and psychological warfare to soldiers and the massive party membership just like the CCP for the North Korea Worker's Party. Kim chose to include peasants in the party membership which differed from Soviet Korean Ho Ga-I's Soviet style small elite worker-oriented party membership. Because more than half of the KPA soldiers came back from China,

Chinese influence was more significant than Soviet material culture. Having said that Chinese culture was dominant, technology influence doctrine and the way armed forces fight. By accepting, and integrating Soviet technology into the KPA, the North Korean had to adopt some part of Soviet military doctrine and since Soviet soldiers conducted much of the training of the KPA Soviet influence was not insignificant.

Furthermore, the KPA was Kim Il Sung's most important and effective tool in his political struggle for leadership of North Korea. Kim Il Sung and his faction successfully purged their rivals, including the Soviet Koreans, the Yen-an group, and the domestic communist faction by maintaining key posts of the KPA. Kim Il Sung and his colleagues learned the following Mao's maximum from their harsh experience in Manchuria: "*Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun* (枪杆子里面出政权)."

Kim Il Sung and his group were closely affiliated with every process of the making of the KPA. Soviet guidance was always crucial and directed many details of the process to create the KPA. Soviet guidelines and the passion of Kim Il Sung's group pushed to create the KPA as quickly as possible. Without the Soviet help, the KPA would not have been created so quickly and successfully. Nonetheless, the initiative of making the KPA was by Kim Il Sung's hand, not by the Soviet's hand. Naturally, Kim Il Sung and his group desperately wanted to have their own army after thirty-years of colonial rule. Kim Il Sung made a passionate speech to 25,000 soldiers at the founding ceremony of the KPA on 8 February 1948:

We must remember that only when we are strong and the democratic forces prevail can genuine peace be preserved, freedom of the country and the people guaranteed, and the enemy will not be able to attempt any reckless attack on us. Therefore, far from presenting the threat of fratricidal civil war as stated in the reactionaries' vicious propaganda, the strengthening of the democratic forces

and the founding of the People's Army in North Korea will prevent US imperialism and the reactionaries in South Korea from starting civil war.¹⁵¹

Although the Soviets advised every detail of the process in making the new army, it was not a one-sided order from the Soviet authority, but an interaction with North Korea. Recently declassified diaries of the former Soviet defense attaché and ambassador to Pyongyang Shtykov show how much the Soviets engaged and watched every detail of North Korean politics and governing.¹⁵² However, the Soviet authority did not directly govern North Korea. The Soviet authority indirectly governed North Korea via North Korean people. In regard to military matters, Kim Il Sung asked when he needed something, and Stalin replied some of Kim's requests. The Woodrow Wilson Center declassified Russian documents including numerous conversations between Stalin and Kim Il Sung which show this typical process. Based on these documents, Kathryn Weathersby and Andrei Lankov emphasize the Soviets' role on the

¹⁵¹ "Speech at a Review of the Korean People's Army, February 8, 1948," in Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 4: January-December 1948* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981), 86.

¹⁵² Korean historian Jeon Hyun-soo obtained Shtykov's diary at his son's house because his son gave diaries to Jeon when Jeon studied his Ph.D in Russia in 1995. This is a very important source to show the Soviet engagement in founding of North Korea because Shtykov was the most powerful figure in North Korean affairs in the Soviet and he wrote every details of his mission in North Korea. Shtykov was dismissed when Stalin criticized him as too pro-North Korean. Stalin several times blamed Shtykov for taking too much care and showing sympathy towards the North Korean and not the Soviet side, including Shtykov's asking Stalin about the Soviet advisors' southern movement when the KPA was moving to South on Kim Il Sung's behalf. Stalin never allowed the Soviet advisors to move the south of 38th parallel. Please look at more details as follows. Hyun-soo Jeon with Gyoo Kahng, *The Shitykov Diaries, Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, winter 1995/1996, *The Cold War In Asia* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C.); 전현수, "한국현대사와 소련의 역할 (1945-1948), 쉬티코프일기 연구." *慶北史學* 27 (2004): 1-28. ; "쉬티코프의 일기가 말하는 북한정권의 성립과정." *역사비평* 32 (1995): 133-162. ; 기광서, "해방 후 소련의 대한반도 정책과 스티코프의 활동." *中蘇研究* 93 (2002): 161-191. ; "슈티코프, 해방 후 북소관계의 실력자." *내일을 여는 역사* 24 (2006): 142-154.

foundation of the DPRK and its politics.¹⁵³ Their arguments are not wrong because the Soviets indirectly governed North Korea and designated many detail of party, administration and army making. Charles Armstrong and Suzy Kim emphasize North Korea's own revolutionary passion and power to make their state and regime by using North Korean documents.¹⁵⁴ Their arguments are not wrong because North Korean people had a strong passion to create their independent country and had a long tradition of communism and politics under the Japanese Empire. For instance, the Korean communist party was the first communist party in East Asia prior to Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese parties. Both conflicting arguments are right. North Korean elites had more initiatives and higher autonomy to govern their country and make their army than counterparts in Eastern Europe. Stalin did not send their support for free but as a loan and he asked for natural resources from North Korea. Stalin provided \$40 million in loans and technical assistance to support North Korea's Economic Renovation and Development Plan and Pyongyang used the lion's share of the Soviet loans to purchase armament and equipment for the KPA.¹⁵⁵ The making of DPRK and its army were not one-sided or directed, but an interactive process between the Soviets' support and guidance and Kim Il Sung's initiative.

¹⁵³ Andrei Lankov, *From Stalin To Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea 1945-1960* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Kathryn Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence From Russian Archives," *Cold War International History Project working paper* 8 (1993); "To Attack or Not Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung, and Prelude to War," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5(1995); "New Evidence on the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (1995): 36; "New Evidence on the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 11 (1998): 176-199.; "Should We Fear This?: Stalin and the Danger of War with America," *Cold War International History Project working paper* 39 (2002); "New Evidence on North Korea," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 14/15 (2003): 5-138.

¹⁵⁴ Charles Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North: Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013)

¹⁵⁵ KIMH, *The Korean War* 1, 104.

One important thing to know about the KPA is that the army was created before the creation of the state, government, administration and the constitution of the DPRK. This was unusual for the general nation building process. This shows how much Kim Il Sung emphasized the army. Ch'oi Yong-gon made a speech on the second year anniversary of the KPA in 1950:

Because Korean people have not had our own army throughout the five hundred years of the Choson Dynasty period, Korean people did not defend our own country from foreign countries' invasions. For the last three decades, we did not defend ourselves from the Imperial Japanese invasion. Korea was left at the mercy of national right by the Imperial Japan and we could not defend ourselves when they killed our people and defiled our girl's chastity. We never forget the time that we hoped to have our own army who defended ourselves from foreign countries' invasion. So, we need our own strong army to defend ourselves from the American imperialists.¹⁵⁶

More importantly, Kim Il Sung had a plan to occupy the South when he started to build the security forces just after the liberation in 1945—much earlier than when he made an invasion plan in the early 1950's. Kim Il Sung believed that he could unite the Korean peninsula by force, not by an election or diplomatic negotiation. Kim Il Sung never considered a peaceful unification option. His harsh experiences from Manchuria and the Soviet Union influenced his faith in a real-politik jungle world. Korean historian Park Myong Lim points out that Kim Il Sung and his group never forgot their desperate hope to have their own strong army throughout their time in Manchuria and the Soviet Union. Park explains that the KPA was a micro-cosmos of North Korean society before and during the Korean War, and the party was the next micro-cosmos after the end of the Korean War.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 689. ; 최용건, “인민군 창건 2 주년 기념사 – 조국통일독립의 강력한 담보로 되는 조선인민군은 적을 소탕하기에 항상 준비되어 있다,” *인민* 2 (1950): 39. NARA, RG 242, SA 2005, Item 2/113.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 686-688.

Kim Il Sung's Korean patriotism was one important element in shaping his vision for the KPA. His sense of patriotism originated from the Japanese conquest of Korea which could have been forestalled if Korea had had a strong army. History of foreign invasions on Korea strengthen his passion and aspiration for a strong nation army. Kim believed the KPA was the most important organization for unification and independence, and the strong modern army was his dream during his harsh time as a guerilla force leader.

To Kim Il Sung, the KPA was not just an army, but also his dream; arguably, it was the most important remedy to overcome his humiliation during his time in Manchuria and the Soviet Union, and an effective tool of revenge to remove pro-Japanese Koreans, who tried to purge the guerilla forces, including himself, in Manchuria.

Why Kim Il Sung formally established seven months before the proclamation of the government in North Korea? First, Kim Il Sung thought of building an army first because his own background was in the military prior to the government. Second, Mao's principal, Kim believed, was that a revolution would be made militarily, then in order to establish a revolutionary government. Third, Kim Il sung thought that he needed to have military forces in order to gain the upper hand over his political rivals because there were his political rivals who were vying to establish themselves as leaders and to build a Korea that confirmed to their own visions. Fourth, if Kim was looking for Soviet support, Kim though that he would get that support if he could show that he had a reasonable chance of gaining control, and the army was

the way to do that.¹⁵⁸ All these reasons were that making army was more important than a government to Kim Il Sung.

Kim Il Sung needed a strong army as soon as possible without Chinese influence and before the Soviet force's withdrawal in 1948. Kim Il Sung led a quick and successful process to create the army and he asked the support and help of the Soviets every time he needed it. The Soviet advisors played the role of deputy commander or advisor of the new KPA institutions. From his personal experiences in Manchuria as the CCP member, Kim wanted to exclude not only his rival the Yeonan faction, but also Chinese influence. In particular, the Minsaengdan incident, in which Chinese people purged hundreds of Korean guerilla forces by naming them Japanese spies in guerilla unit camp, was the strongest influential event for Kim Il Sung to consider sovereignty and independence. I explain the how three events influenced Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA. First, I explain the influence of the Minsaengdan Incident. Second, I explain the Chinese influence and third, I explain the Soviets' influence.

The Influence of the Minsaengdan Incident

Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA was not just integration or a combination between two giant communist style wars. The KPA and his vision were more than that because of one more thing: the Korean factor. The KPA was a result of acculturation between three different cultures: the Soviet Union, China and Korea.¹⁵⁹ Ultimately, I call the KPA's way of war Koreanized

¹⁵⁸ Professor Eve Levin suggests me the idea about four reasons why Kim Il Sung built the army prior to the government. Eve Levin, e-mail message to the author, April 26, 2014.

¹⁵⁹ Military historian professor Adrian R Lewis suggests me the idea of the KPA as the Koreanized armed forces by integrating the Soviet and Chinese culture. Koreans are Koreans whether they were lived, educated and trained by foreigners. Anthropologist Professor Felix Moos suggests me that Kim Il Sung was neither the Soviet nor Maoistic like communist, while Syngman Rhee was not American style democrat. They were typical Koreans. A long time

armed forces and the Koreanized vision of war. The KPA was neither a simple copy of the Soviet style army nor Maoistic people's army, but the new product of acculturation between three cultures. For producing Koreanized armed forces, Kim Il Sung's experience was a key factor.

The Minsaengdan incident was not only an event as Korea factor in shaping Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA. Nevertheless, the Minsaengdan Incident was a deep scar and an unforgettable event to young Kim Il Sung and his group in the 1930's because the incident was not one day event but series of purge from 1933 to 1936. Young Kim Il Sung had deeply emotional engagement from this tragic event because Kim Il Sung could have been a victim of the purge by the Minsaengdan Incident. Kim Il Sung survived. However, Kim Il Sung never forgot his emotion, feelings, sorrow, vengeance, fearfulness and deep trauma from this tragic story. Because many Korean potential leaders were purged in this incident, Kim Il Sung could be a young Korean leader of guerilla forces. Without understanding the Minsaengdan Incident, Kim's vision of war and the KPA cannot be understood. The Minsaengdan Incident was one of the most important events for understanding why Kim Il Sung and his group had strong enough aspirations to have their own army culturally and politically.

The Minsaengdan Incident was began by the Eastern Manchurian branch of the CCP in the early 1930's towards Korean Communists. This incident was a series of purges between 1932 and 1936. 500 to 2,000 Korean Communists were killed by their comrades because the victims

diplomat to Seoul, Gregory Handerson explain the Korean characteristic in his book, Gregory Henderson, *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968). "Acculturation" is a theoretical concept of Anthropology study. Acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures. The effects of acculturation can be seen at multiple levels in both interacting cultures. Please see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acculturation>. (Accessed March 1, 2015)

were regarded as Japanese spies. Because of so many Koreans were purged by Chinese colleagues in the anti-Japanese united front, this remained a significant lesson for people who survived from the purge, including Kim Il Sung.¹⁶⁰ Kim Il Sung could have been a victim of this incident but he survived. Kim Il Sung arrested in late 1933 and exonerated in early 1934.¹⁶¹ Kim watched hundreds of Korean colleagues' innocent deaths not at the hands of their enemy Japanese army, but by their partner Chinese CCP members. Kim Il Sung and his group members never forgot this shocking event when they were young, and this was the most powerful reason why Kim Il Sung wanted to exclude Chinese influences and his rival, pro-Chinese people. After the Minsaengdan Incident, Kim Il Sung could have been a rising young Korean leader among guerilla forces, but he was still a deep scared.

I argue that this was an ethnic cleansing because all victims were Koreans. The Chinese leadership suspected that Korean Communists made an alliance with Korean nationalists to destroy them. Chinese leaders believed about 70 to 80 percent of the Koreans in the Jiandao guerrilla base had joined the Minsaengdan and built their own secret organization. Han Hong Gu argues that this was not an ethnic conflict because Koreans did not react collectively against this

¹⁶⁰ Hongkoo Han, "Colonial Origins of Juche: The Minsaengdan Incident of the 1930s and the Birth of the North Korea – China Relationship," in *Origins of North Korea's Juche: Colonialism, War, and Development*, eds. Jae-Jung Suh (New York, NY: Lexington Press, 2013), 34-35. The following articles deal with the Minsaengdan incident. 한홍구, "민생단 사건의 비교사적 연구," *韓國文化* 25(2000): 193-229. Hongkoo Han, *Wounded Nationalism: The Minsaengdan Incident and Kim Il Sung in Eastern Manchuria*, (Ph.D. dissertation., University of Washington, 1999); 신주백, *만주지역 한인의 민족운동사, 1920-1945* (서울: 아세아문화사, 1999); 김성호, *1930년대 연변 민생단사건 연구* (서울: 백산자료원, 1999); 이덕일, "民生團 사건이 東北抗日聯軍 2軍에 미친 영향," *韓國史研究* 91 (1995): 129-166.; 정병일, "반민생단투쟁의 정치사적 의의: 김일성 부상과 조국광복회 성립의 동인," *社會科學研究* 16, no 1 (2008): 578-664.

¹⁶¹ Armstrong, *North Korean Revolution*, 30.

purge and most of Koreans actively participated in this hunt to find Japanese spies.¹⁶² However, this incident was basically a typical ethnic conflict between the Chinese and the Koreans. Korean people in some regions of Manchuria were more than half of the total population. For instance, 90.5% of the Eastern Manchuria branch of the CCP members—636 members—were Koreans in April 1931.¹⁶³ This Korean population led to Chinese fear of Koreans' influence over the region and guerilla forces. The CCP leaders especially targeted young Korean officers of the guerilla forces. More than 80 young Korean officers higher than a platoon leader were dubbed Japanese spies and killed.¹⁶⁴ Kim Il Sung was also pointed out as a Japanese spy, but his Chinese mentors and colleagues supported him as an innocent young man. Kim Il Sung was fluent in Chinese, graduated from a Chinese school, and his position was a lower rank at that time. One CCP report about Kim Il Sung on December 1935 was interesting because this report showed that, while he was only suspected as a spy, the CCP recognized his talent and potential as a leader:

Kim Il Sung. Korean. CCP Membership from 1932. Educated. Age 23. Brave and Active. Fluent in Chinese Language. Partisan background. Some Suspected Japanese Spy. Popular among people. Trust from people. Little Knowledge on Political Affairs.¹⁶⁵

After this Incident, the CCP leadership recognized unnecessarily massive innocent Korean victims and allowed Koreans to obtain limited important positions of the units. After this Incident, Korean guerilla forces enjoyed limited autonomy and were placed in the same unit. This huge unforgettable incident strongly influenced young Kim Il Sung. Kim Il Sung watched his friends, senior mentors, and colleagues die, not only by enemy Japanese forces but also by

¹⁶² Han, "Wounded Nationalism," 30.

¹⁶³ 이덕일, "民生團 사건이 東北抗日聯軍 2 軍에 미친 영향," 130.

¹⁶⁴ 정병일, "반민생단투쟁의 정치사적 의의: 김일성 부상과 조국광복회 성립의 동인," 589.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 594.

their senior partner, Chinese leaders. Young Kim Il Sung never forgot the humiliation and fear of this four-year purge period. Kim desperately wanted to have a strong independent army without foreign influence, especially China. His time in Manchuria under the Chinese leadership and in the Soviet Union under Soviet leadership made him a desperate seeker for independence and sovereignty. The KPA was his dream come true. Kim Il Sung and his group members spent their emotional and political energy and time for their most important project: army building. Kim Il Sung and his group members were relatively uneducated and low profile compared to his rivals, but they knew that their power came from a rifle, not from a pen. Regarding the KPA, although the KPA received many weapons, equipment, supplies and logistics, Kim Il Sung's group members hardly shows that their appreciation to the Soviet Union while they always show their appreciation to the Soviet Union in public speeches regarding industrial, educational, administrative and trade sectors. Kim Il Sung's group wanted to emphasize their own efforts regarding the army and excluded foreign support.

For instance, Ch'oi Yong-gon emphasized the efforts of Koreans to make the KPA in his speech at the second anniversary ceremony of the KPA in 1950:

Kim Il Sung's guerilla unit sacrificed their everything for a liberation of Fatherland. Their sacrifice and patriotism became the skeleton of the KPA. Their experiences became the foundation of the KPA. All people did everything for the project of the KPA creation. Two years ago, we could declare that we had our own army to the world...With the Soviet support, Comrade Kim Il Sung led to the successful making of the KPA.¹⁶⁶

Due to experiences of Kim Il Sung and his group, such as the Minsengdan Incident, they emphasized the historical root of the KPA from their guerilla forces, not from the Soviet Union and China. To Kim Il Sung and his group, the KPA was continuing in the spirit of their guerilla

¹⁶⁶ NARA, RG242, Box 25, File No. 200623, *군사지식* no.1 (1950), 4.

forces, not a new product of the Soviet Union. They wanted to emphasize the Korean historical root of the KPA and argue that the KPA was neither a Soviet agent nor the Soviet product. The KPA could not become the successful modern regular army without Soviet support and Kim Il Sung's group's aspiration.

The Chinese Influence

Kim Il Sung had lived among the people's army or guerilla forces for a decade in Manchuria. Kim watched how Mao's people's army defeated the relatively modernized Nationalist Army. The people's war was a lifestyle to Kim Il Sung. He chose to embrace the modern regular army standard, but his background in guerilla-style fighting also led him to incorporate techniques from the people's war. For a people's war, the army should respect the masses and get their support. Mao several time emphasized the effects of guerilla forces for a people's war: The following is his quotation about people's war:

This army is powerful because of its division into two parts, the main forces and the regional forces, with the former available for operations in any region whenever necessary and the latter concentrating on defending their own localities and attacking the enemy there in co-operation with the local militia and the self-defence corps. This division of labour and won the whole-hearted support of the people. Without this correct division of labour—if, for example, attention were paid only to the role of the main forces while that of the regional forces were neglected—it would likewise be impossible to defeat the enemy in the conditions obtaining in China's Liberated Areas. Under the regional forces, numerous armed working teams have been organized, which are well trained and hence better qualified for military, political, and mass work; they penetrate into the rearmost areas behind of the enemy lines, strike at the enemy and arouse the masses to anti-Japanese struggle, thus giving support to the frontal military

operations of the various Liberated Areas. In all this they have achieved great success.¹⁶⁷

Kim Il Sung was a student of the People's War school. The Yen-an group, another core element of the army's leading positions, and returned Chinese Civil War veterans, who became more than half of the KPA manpower, were also students of People's War school. Kim recognized the importance of mass support in the following speech:

Loving and respecting the people and serving their interests faithfully is noble traits of soldiers of the People's Army. In bygone days the anti-Japanese guerrillas always loved and respected the people everywhere. When they were billeted on villagers, they used to draw water, sweep the yards, gather firewood for them and explain cordially to them how they should conduct themselves. Our People's Army is the army of the people just as its name indicates. It must carry forward the glorious revolutionary traditions set by the anti-Japanese guerrillas and fully develop the noble quality of cherishing and loving the people wholeheartedly and helping them actively, just as the anti-Japanese guerrillas did. Of course, now that unlike in the past they sleep in their own quarters and eat in their own mess halls, soldiers need not take the trouble of visiting the people to carry water for them and sweep their yards. Loving people does not only mean that you should help them in their daily lives. More important, you should solidly defend the people's freedom and happiness preventing the enemy from trampling upon them. Love for the people on the part of the soldiers of the People's Army must find expression in struggle to deter the US imperialists and their stooges from acting rashly, to defend the revolutionary gains and the people's security dependably and to reunify the country by crushing the enemy at a stroke if it attacks us recklessly. Their love of the people must also be expressed in their economic use and loving care of the weapons, other technical equipment and various logistical supplies. The Party and the state provide the People's Army with highly effective weapons and equipment along with other things needed for their daily life. The soldiers should take good care of valuable material obtained at the cost of the sweat and blood of the people and use it economically.¹⁶⁸

Despite this emphasis on the importance of popular opinion, the KPA and Kim Il Sung were not generous to the people in South Korea. They killed massive numbers of people, raped

¹⁶⁷Mao Tse-Tung, *Selected Military Writing of Mao Tse-Tung* (Peking, China: Foreign Language Press, 1967), 303-304.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid*, 184-185.

girls, burned houses and destroyed people's properties. They were not a generous people's army in terms of their cruel war crimes. However, Kim Il Sung believed that he was a student of the People's War and was over-confident that he was a liberator of the people in the South.

Although they were theoretically well grounded in the tactics of warfare, the KPA was unprepared in terms of practical logistics and supply. Commanders and staffs of the KPA were still guerilla forces not conventional forces. During the Second World War, the Soviet General Staff managed the whole civil economy, manpower and defense industry to support the front units logistically.¹⁶⁹ But, North Korea did not have this Soviet war system and the KPA had only one-month's supply of gas, ammunition, food and equipment. They were not good at maintaining services to continually support their mobile forces.

Kim Il Sung's big talk for a quick victory and sufficient logistics led to an extreme disaster and he fell into narcissism when the war began. Kim Il Sung overestimated the KPA's military capabilities and himself as a military leader of conventional forces. Kim Il Sung's mindset was still guerilla forces. Kim Il Sung did not know how a large scale operation function during a war, such as logistics, reserve forces, supplies, fire, intelligence, air power, navy and signal. The Soviet Army of 1945 in Manchuria, where Kim Il Sung closely watched, reached the highest level of modern and conventional forces because they fought against the Nazi Army for four years. Commander of the Soviet Army participated in Operational August Storm against the Japanese Army were masters who led combined armed forces in a large scale operation and

¹⁶⁹ Books of Lennart Samuelson and Sally W. Stoker explain very well on the Soviet military-economic planning for a war. Lennart Samuelson, *Plans for Stalin's War Machine: Tukhachevskii and Military-Economic Planning, 1925-1941*(New York, NY: St.Martin's Press, 2000); Sally W. Stoker, *Forging Stalin's Army: Marshal Tukhachevsky and the Politics of Military Innovation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998)

managed logistic, supply, fire, signal, intelligence, and air power. Kim Il Sung worked with PLA before he went to the Soviet Union. Pre-1941 PLA was guerilla forces. During the Chinese Civil War, the PLA became the conventional forces from guerilla forces. Kim Il Sung mainly worked with PLA during the 1930s and early 1940 before the PLA became conventional forces.

Therefore, Kim Il Sung was still soldiers of the guerilla forces.

During the war, the Soviet defense attaché Rasuvave continually criticized the KPA, including its lack of logistics, reserve forces and supplies, and the KPA's poor performance, including the poor leadership of operational and tactical commanders, the lack of skill at equipment requisition, and the poor command and control system.¹⁷⁰ Yet, it was far superior to the ROKA. The question is, why was Kim Il Sung in such a hurry and why did Stalin allow this unprepared war to begin too early? Kim Il Sung and Pak Hon-yong strongly believed three assumptions and two of which were wrong assumptions: the uprising of many communists in the South, the quick defeat of the ROK Army, and non-US intervention would assure early victory. In particular, Pak Hon-yong considered the Korean War as a people's war. Kim Il Sung's view was not very different from Pak Hon-yong. Millett estimates the Korean War as the people's war:

Measured by the postcolonial politics of Asia, the war in Korea began in 1948 and is not yet finished...In the writing of Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh, with a Hispanic variant produced by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, the concept of "people's war" helps explain the politics of postwar Korea – with one very large exception. In Korea there were two revolutionary movements trying to replace the old order...The Communists south to use a people's war against "puppet" southern Koreans, and the ultranationalist revolutionaries used their own people's war variant to replace American military occupation. They then applied their new political power to defeat the southern Communists and challenge the

¹⁷⁰ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *소련 군사고문단장 라주바예프의 6.25 전쟁보고서* 1, 25.

northern Communists with the reluctant help of the United States and the United Nations.¹⁷¹

Kim Il Sung believed himself a good student of both the school of the modern regular army and of the people's war. Kim Il Sung's vision of war integrated the Soviet mechanized operation and the Maoistic people's war. From his vision, an invasion plan was a window to show his integrated vision from the Soviet mechanized penetration and the people's war in the South. Two successful victories of communist giants, including Mao's victory and the Soviet's victory, were idealistic models to Kim Il Sung. He was not just a passive watcher but an active participant in the two wars. In particular, because Kim Il Sung and his group were professional veterans of the people's war in Manchuria for a decade, they started a people's war much earlier than conventional warfare in June 1950. The some parts of the Korean War started in 1948, not 1950. Kim Il Sung imbibed the Chinese idea of a guerilla war and tried to implement one against the South even before the formal onset of the Korean War in 1950.

Kim Il Sung created the Pyongyang Institute, established on 8 February 1946, and it had the department of South Korea and it educated intelligence agents and partisans to infiltrate the South. The first graduates were about 100 and they infiltrated the South after their graduation on June 1946. Kim Il Sung also created the Kangdong Politics Institute, established on 1 January 1948, and continually produced guerillas to infiltrate the South. These guerillas in the South led to many uprisings, including a military uprising in Yeosu and Suncheon on 19 October 1948. From November 1948 to March 1950, ten major infiltrations were conducted by about 2,400 guerillas, and they made South Korea a chaotic and anarchic state. The ROK Army successfully found and killed many of guerillas and only 460 guerillas existed in the South when the KPA

¹⁷¹ Millet, *The Korean War, 1945-1950*, 13-14.

invaded the South on June 1950. Because of the war against guerillas, three of eight ROK Army divisions—2th Division in Daejeon, 3rd Division in Daegu, and 5th Division in Kwangju—had to conduct counter-guerilla operations in a rear area. These ROK Army divisions could not do battalion exercises because of their missions, and this was one factor why the ROK Army could not defend against the KPA's invasion. At the same time, without successful counter-guerilla operations, the Republic of Korea would not have existed when the KPA invaded the South.¹⁷²

Kim Il Sung was a student of the People's War School and he knew very much about it. Kim Il Sung planned the People's War when he drafted the first official military institution, "Pyongyang Institute." His thousands of guerillas already had shot and killed the ROK army soldiers, marking the beginning of his own People's War. This guerilla already started by Kim Il Sung and Pak Hon-yong before Kim Il Sung asked Stalin's permission to invade the South with conventional forces.

Nonetheless, this insurgency war between 1948 and 1950 was essentially organized local communists not by North Korea People's Army. Guerillas from North Korea helped uprisings and protest of local communists of South Korea. But, the main organizer of guerilla activities was members of South Korean Worker's Party (SKWP) and the insurgency war was mainly conducted by locals of South Korea. The role of the KPA was assistance and help not primary actor. For instance, Jeju island uprising was organized by local communists of the SKWP, not by the KPA.

¹⁷²장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 179-191.; 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1*, 369-376; 리승엽, "조국통일을 위한 남반부 인민의 유격투쟁," *근로자* No. 1 (January 1950) NARA, RG 242 SA 2005 Item 1/34; 이기석, 남반부인민유격대의 영웅한 구국투쟁," *인민*, No. 7 (July, 1950), NARA, RG 242, SA 2005, Item 2/113. From 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2*, 826.

Regardless the role of the KPA in the insurgency war between 1948 and 1950, Kim Il Sung started the guerilla warfare much earlier than June of 1950 in his mind. Kim Il Sung basically planned the war for reunification as a revolutionary war. It was his expertise. Kim, as a student of the People's War School, believed that the organized massive uprising would be very effective in a rear area when he planned the draft of war for 1950.

Kim Il Sung was optimistic for massive uprisings of South Korea when the KPA invaded because of many uprisings for over the five years from 1945 to 1950. Just like Mao, Kim Il Sung planned the war, including two parts, the main forces and guerilla forces. The main force was the Soviet style regular army, including many Chinese Civil War veterans, would start the Soviet tactical offensive while the guerrilla forces would start their own guerilla battles with local civilians. Kim's plan for a people's war was not successful. His assumption was too optimistic. Nonetheless, Kim never gave up his vision for a people's war until he died because he never forgot his experiences for a people's war and Mao's success.

The Soviets' Influence

To Kim Il Sung, the Soviet armed forces were the ideal model for his own army. When he was a participant in Operation August Storm, he closely watched how the most powerful enemy Japanese forces were destroyed by the Soviet forces in just one month. Korean and Chinese guerilla forces have been fighting against the Japanese forces for some decades and never dreamed that guerilla forces could win the war against the forces so quickly. But, the Soviet army completely destroyed their powerful enemy in just one month. Operation August Storm was the most successful operation of the Soviet forces during the Second World War and,

arguably, the Soviet army was the most powerful ground force on earth when they destroyed the Japanese in Manchuria. This operation was the final highlight of the Soviet Deep Operation. When they conducted Operation August Storm, they were master veterans of the war and had many experiences from a four-year bloody war against the Nazi army in the European theater. Young Kim Il Sung from a poor and small country witnessed the most successful modern army's operation. To him, the Soviet modern army was his ideal army and a symbol of modernization. His ten-year long people's war was an important experience, but this large scale operation was the most powerful influence over Kim Il Sung's blueprint for his own modern army in the near future. When he entered North Korea, he quickly started his project to build the strong modern army with his colleagues and Soviet equipment.

From his experiences, Kim Il Sung believed the people who had a harsh and valuable guerilla experience could become the modern armed soldiers just like the Red Army, which Kim Il Sung regarded as one of the best armies in 1945. His four years in the Soviet Union and the Soviet's Operation August Storm of Manchuria in 1945 made Kim believe the Soviet modern army should be a model for the KPA. Kim actually planned to participate in this operation as the Soviet captain, but his mission was cancelled because of the victory occurred too quickly. With his people's war experience, Kim Il Sung strongly believed that the liberation war in Korea should be a mix between a people's war just like Mao's war and the modern armed warfare just like the Operational August Storm.¹⁷³ Kim's vision of war was a mixed war of Mao's people's war and the Soviet modern war, which were arguably contradictory.

¹⁷³ Suh Dong man estimates that the KPA had three features as the army: modern regular army, people's army and guerilla forces. And Kim Il Sung found the historical tradition of the KPA from his guerilla forces not from the KVA's. See 서동만, *북조선 사회주의체제 성립사*, 261-270.

Kim Il Sung emphasized a modernization of the regular army again and again. Many of his speeches were about this. He saw the army as one of the distinctive modernization processes of its society. His model was the Soviet army. His military knowledge was good and he gave detailed advice after tactical exercises of the army. Although the exercise scale was battalion level, he pointed out command-control system, fire power, the use of air force, coordination between the services, etc. In one speech, Kim noted:

Today's event was the largest tactical infantry battalion exercise. Different services and arms such as the air force, artillery and tanks participated in it for the first time since the foundation of the People's Army. This tactical exercise was aimed at teaching all generals and officers present here, how to organize and command such as an intricate exercise as today's... The most commendable feature of today's exercise was the coordination between the different services and arms. In modern warfare it is highly important to skillfully organize this coordination and ensure a harmonious firing of firearms. Only when units from different services and arms coordinate their movements, can they cover each other's advance, and eliminate the enemy successfully. So, every commander should try his best to organize and maintain perfectly coordinated movements under any circumstances. At today's exercise the battle was well commanded and communications were comparatively well organized. The personnel and equipment arrived at the designated place in good time, to attack the "enemy" successfully in accordance with the commanders' decisions, since the commanding system was well set up and communications properly established. At the tactical exercise the use of fire power was organized in minute detail and their various attacks were also successful. Above all, the air force units bombed the targets accurately. It proves that they worked really hard during their daily flight training. The artillerymen also smashed all the targets.¹⁷⁴

The former Soviet defense attaché Razuvaev estimated that the KPA was poor at handling equipment, timely logistics and command and control systems at the initial stage of war

¹⁷⁴ "Let Us Strengthen Tactical Training, Speech Delivered to the Officers Who Took Part in a Tactical Exercise of the Infantry Battalion Held at the First Central Military Academy, July 20 1949," in Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 5: January-June 1950* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981), 158-159.

while their passion was very high.¹⁷⁵ These reports shows that, while Kim valued military effectiveness and coordination in the abstract, Kim was not able to achieve them in reality even though Kim tried to pretend that he had. Although the Soviet advisor's estimate of the KPA's performance at the initial stage of the war was not good, Kim Il Sung tried to build his army as a modernized regular army in terms of Western standard military capability, including fire power, the use of air forces, logistics, supply, and command and control. Kim Il Sung emphasized that the KPA must be the regular army, not guerilla forces, and that the KPA should learn modern military science and technology. In particular, he pointed out that the returned veterans of the Chinese Civil War should become the Soviet style regular army beyond the Maoistic people's army. The following speech of Kim Il Sung was given to one of returned units from China:

Men and officers of Army Unit No. 655 must qualify as a regular army as soon as possible by living up to the regulations in all aspects of military activities... You are hardened and experienced through battles. But you have no experience of regular army life. This you must learn from those comrades who have longer service records in the regular People's Army. The soldiers who have served in the People's Army since its foundation can be regarded as worthy of the name of a regular army in the main. So you had better learn humbly from them what you do not know. Your combat experience, if buttressed with the qualities of a regular army and modern military science and technology, will make you an invincible combat force... Every soldier should be provided with a clear-cut idea of a regular army and a correct understanding of the essence of the People's Army discipline so than he can observe the regulations voluntarily.¹⁷⁶

The Soviet Army was the role model of the KPA. The Sovietization was the top policy agenda of North Korean regime. KPA studied the history, technology, doctrine, equipment and

¹⁷⁵ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *소련 군사고문단장 라주바예프의 6.25 전쟁보고서 1*, 129. The performance of the KPA will be discussed further in the second volume of this book, *The North Korean People's Army at War, 1950-1953*.

¹⁷⁶ "The People's Army Must Develop Into A Modern Regular Army, Speech at the Meeting of the Officers of Unit No. 655 of the Korean People's Army, July 29 1949," in Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 5: January-June 1950* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981), 180.

field manuals of the Soviet Army. Kim Il Sung encouraged North Korean people to learn the Russian language. The KPA translated many Soviet field and equipment manuals.

The translated work “The history of the Soviet Army” is a good example and the original copy was captured by U.S. forces in Pyongyang in 1950. In this work, the KPA soldiers studied not only the Soviet modern army but also the enemy’s army because the enemy’s army was the modern army that the KPA had to learn.¹⁷⁷ The North Korean Army published the reference guide of the KPA on military exercise, the captured document in Pyongyang, 1950, included an exercise guide to the foreign modern army.¹⁷⁸ One part was about the Soviet army on exercise of reserve forces from page one to twelve.¹⁷⁹ Interestingly, from page seventy three to eighty six, the German Army on night military exercise was included.¹⁸⁰ This kind of field manual and reference guide sometimes derived from translation of the Soviet pieces, but many works were selective and edited by the KPA. More interestingly, this reference military guide included British and even American military exercise as role models.¹⁸¹

As a firm believer in “Knowing your enemy,” Kim Il Sung and the KPA considered the special operation of the US army an important area of study. The Army published the KPA military reference guide on special operation.¹⁸² It included not only the Soviet style operation but also German and American ones. This guide included the case study of one village battle

¹⁷⁷ NARA, RG 242, National Archives Collection of Foreign Records Seized, 1941-, Records Seized by U.S. Military Forces in Korea, Shipping Advice (SA) No. 2009, Box 1, Item 18, 1-2.

¹⁷⁸ NARA, RG 242, SA 2008, Box Unknown, No Unknown, *군사참고자료 선집 (2) 군사훈련*, 1.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 3.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 39.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, 46, 54.

¹⁸² NARA, RG 242, SA 2008, Box Unknown, No Unknown, *군사참고자료 선집 (3) 특수전투*, 1.

during the German-Soviet war from page one to fifteen. This also included the American style operation on mountain areas from page twenty seven to forty eight and the German style special operation from eight two to the final page.¹⁸³ This included case studies of German and American Armies. This case studies included the village battle of the German-Soviet War, the American style operation on mountain, and the German style operation and counter solutions.¹⁸⁴

To Kim Il Sung, Sovietization was modernization. The KPA was a good example. As a microcosm of society, the Sovietization of the KPA was one of the most important modernization processes of society. To follow the Soviet army model, Kim Il Sung used the Soviet guide to create the army stage-by-stage. To follow the model of the Soviet Army meant to learn scientific and technological modern army equipment and doctrine. To achieve this, the KPA created the military journal, *군사지식* (Journal of Military Knowledge), and it was published by the Combat Training Bureau of the North Korea Defense Ministry. Kim Il Sung encouraged the soldiers to learn modern technology and doctrine. This journal was the North Korean version of *Military Review*. The followings are the front page of the first *Military Knowledge* in 1950.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 2.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 3, 16, 44.

¹⁸⁵ NARA, RG242, Box 25, File No. 200623, *군사지식* no.1 (1950), 1.



Figure 1: The First *Military Knowledge*, January 1950¹⁸⁶ Figure 2: The History of the Soviet Army, 1949¹⁸⁷

The picture of military uniformed Stalin was included in the first *Military Knowledge*. It is notable that it is not just a picture of Stalin, but Stalin in military uniform. Often in Soviet posters depicting Stalin, Stalin is in civilian clothes, or sometimes in uniform-like clothing that is not a military uniform. But here Stalin is presented as a military leader, a hero. This suggests that Stalin is being presented as military leader rather than as a political or ideological leader.

The Army published the first *Military Knowledge* in January 1950. Kim Il Sung had asked Stalin's permission to see Kim's invasion plan much before January 1950 and finally received a positive answer from Stalin on 31 January 1950. Kim Il Sung had started his guerillas to infiltrate the South in 1946. *Military Knowledge* was a final preparation for his modernization process of the KPA and he finally published the first one when he received the positive signal from Stalin on January 1950. The first page of *Military Knowledge* was military uniformed

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 1.

¹⁸⁷ NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Box 1, Item 18, 1.

Stalin's picture¹⁸⁸ and his speech at the Red Army Academy on May 1935. Stalin emphasized human resources as the most important capital of the world. From *Military Knowledge*, Kim Il Sung hoped the KPA soldiers would become the strongest soldiers of Operation August Storm where he participated and was moved by the Soviets' successful large scale operation. The first article of this first journal was Defense Minister Ch'oi Yong-gon's speech at the second anniversary ceremony of the KPA in Pyongyang. The second article was about the Defense Ministry Directive and the third chapter was the congratulatory message of Kim Ung, the Chief of the Combat Training Bureau (Publication host for the journal) and later Commander-in-Chief of the Front Command.

The main body included a long section on tactics, military exercise, branch technology, military history.¹⁸⁹ Since all the articles included by-lines, it can be seen that the journal was not translated work but the creative and critical writing of North Korean officers. This meant that *Military Knowledge* showed the high degree of military professionalism of North Korean officers in 1950. One piece included suggestions how to successfully lead shooting training. Others concerned the development of the concept of air power, the night training of the navy ships, tactical exercise of field artillery unit, and successful winter exercises for mechanized units. These directions did not suit the level of guerilla forces, but rather came close to a Western standard modern army's level. Interestingly, the military history was about the case study of the Soviets' successful operation against the German army in Leningrad from January to February of 1944¹⁹⁰. The writer Yu Shin included a detailed map of the battle. The map was explained in the Korean language. This shows that the KPA intensely studied the military history of the Second

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 2.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 3-4.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 169-170.

World War from the Soviet, German, American, British and Japanese experiences. The KPA knew and understood, at least in theory, the large scale modern operation, including mechanized mobile forces, fire power, logistics, rear area operation, signal, air force support, navy, intelligence, troop leading procedure, command and communication. In less than five years, the KPA became the modern regular army at least in theory.

The KPA conducted mainly battalion level exercises before their invasion. But they hurried to invade the South because they were much stronger than the ROK Army anyway and believed one month's quick victory would be possible with the massive uprisings then occurring in the South. If the KPA prepared over more years for regiment and division scale exercises in this direction with a full range of reserve forces and logistics, the Korean War would have been a different style of war. The military knowledge level of the KPA's officer corps was significantly high, at least in theory. The KPA's works were beyond copy-and-pastes of the Soviet works. The KPA started to apply the Soviets' and other modern army's experiences to their own geography, terrain and situation. The KPA started the Koreanization of the Soviet military experiences.

Conclusion

To sum up, three factors made Kim Il Sung's vision for the KPA. Firstly, the Minsaengdan Incident and his time under senior foreign leadership in China in the 1930's and in the Soviet Union in the early 1940's made him seek independence and sovereignty. Secondly, his time in the guerilla forces in Manchuria made him a student of the People's War School. Mao's victory strengthened his belief. Finally, his time in the Soviet Union made Kim Il Sung believe the Soviet Army, arguably, had the strongest ground forces in a world. The

Sovietization of the army was not just a military job but rather a modernization project of a society. Kim Il Sung believed that the future war would be a large scale operation just like the Second World War. Kim Il Sung and his group members started his dream project and, on the eve of the War, the KPA finally became Kim Il Sung's wanted army.

5. The Soviet Union's Influence and Policy – Sovietization of Society

Strategy is the art of combining preparation for war and the grouping of operations for achieving the goal set by the war for the armed forces. Strategy decides issues associated with the employment of the armed forces and all the resources of a country for achieving ultimate war aims. While operational art must take into account the possibilities presented by the immediate rear (front logistics), the strategist must take into account the entire rear, both his own and the enemy's, represented by the state with all its economic and political capabilities. A strategist will be successful if he correctly evaluates the nature of a war, which depends on different economic, social, geographic, administrative and technical factors.¹⁹¹

Aleksandr A. Svechin

One of the stereotypes about the North Korean People's Army before the Korean War is that the Soviet Union did everything and North Korea did nothing. In this view, common in the historiography, the Soviet Union created the KPA before the Korean War because North Korea received weapons, supplies, and the many things they needed to build the KPA from the Soviet Union and learned to fight from the Soviet Union. Indeed, Kim Il Sung mentioned several times that the Soviet Army was the ideal type of modern army for North Korea, and the goal of the KPA soldiers was to become warriors who know modern technology and doctrine to fight at maximum capability. Nonetheless, the KPA was neither a product of the Soviet Union nor the Soviet-style army. In placing such emphasis on the role of the Soviets, most historians fail to acknowledge Chinese influence.

First, I argue that the Soviet material culture of war strongly influenced the KPA, and the Soviet Army was a role model of modern force for the KPA. However, it was North Korean elites, not the Soviet Union, who took the initiative in constructing the KPA. Before the Korean

¹⁹¹ Kent D. Lee, ed. *Aleksandr A. Svechin: Strategy* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: East View Publications, 1992), 69.

War, Soviet Union undeniably influenced North Korean society between 1945 and 1948. The Soviet Union supplied many material goods to the KPA. The KPA would not have been well developed without the Soviet Union's support and guidance. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union did not take the primary role, but rather only advised. According to declassified documents of the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang from 1945 to 1948, the Soviet Union embassy of North Korea watched very closely all political, diplomatic, economic and military activities of North and South Korean society. Therefore, the Soviet Union naturally engaged in the KPA's building process, but it did not initiate or direct it. The Soviet Union wanted North Korea to have a strong army as soon as possible because of their planned withdrawal of their own forces. The Soviet Army left some equipment and tanks in North Korea when they returned to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union did not send any equipment and supplies except by Kim Il Sung's request. Upon receipt of Kim Il Sung's request, the Kremlin acceded to some, but not all. The process was interactive, between the primary actor, Kim Il Sung, and the advisor, the Soviet Union. Moreover, Soviet material support was not free at all.

After the 1956 crisis, Kim Il Sung denied this Soviet Union's support from 1945 to 1950 in achieving an independent state so that he could emphasize the *Juche* (self-reliance) Ideology. Kim Il Sung underestimated the Soviet Union and China's roles and overstated Korea's role in the Korean War. On the other hand, the historians of the Soviet Union castigated North Korea for its understatement of support and argued the Soviet Union created most things for North Korean society. These Russian historians overestimated the Soviet Union's role and underestimated Korea's role. Although Kim Il Sung ignored the Soviet Union's support after the Korean War, Kim Il Sung and his colleagues emphasized the Soviet Union's help before the Korean War in their speeches and writings in the late 1940's.

In this chapter, I explain how the Soviet Army arrived in North Korea and how the Soviet Union influenced North Korean society. During the final stage of the Second World War, the Soviet Union participated in the war against Japan in keeping with the repeated requests of the US and the UK. Because Stalin's primary interest was the war against Nazi Germany, Stalin joined the war against Japan only after destroying Nazi Germany, and conditional upon a Lend Lease program from the US. Thus, the Kremlin had no master plan to occupy the Korean peninsula, and there were no Korean experts or language speakers in the Soviet Army at that time.

I argue that the policy of the Soviet Civil Administration in North Korea (SCV) towards Korea was mainly indirect governance because of the Kremlin's indifference toward that state. Therefore, North Korea enjoyed a high degree of autonomy between 1945 and 1950. The Soviet Union's influence was especially strong between 1945 and 1948 until Soviet military forces withdrew, with Soviets' maintaining close guidance and some level of intervention. With the emergence of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and Western powers, and the establishment of a new world order in northeast Asia with a new treaty between the Soviet Union and Communist China, Stalin became focused on the Korean peninsula. However, the Soviet Union maintained a policy of indirect involvement, North Korea generally enjoyed greater autonomy compared to Eastern Europe, where the Soviet Union had the most interest.

Secondly, I propose the KPA building process, which was a part of a national modernization project in the socio-cultural context. All Koreans in North and South Korea during a post-liberation period from 1945 to 1950 had two main aspirations: a strong national army to defend itself from another tragic colonization and economic development to increase the well-being of Korean people. Modernization was a key tool to achieve the two objectives.

Modernization in Korea led to not only an expectation about technological and economic development, but also about women's rights, cultural modernity (Sovietization or Americanization), increased mass education and freedom of sexuality. Although some social and cultural modernization already started during the colonization period, the aspirations and passions of the Korean people to learn modern skills and techniques from advanced countries, the Soviet Union and the USA, was higher than ever before. Modernization in North Korean society meant Sovietization just like Americanization occurred in South Korean society. The post-liberation Korean society wanted to overcome the Japanese colonial legacy and become a post-colonized society, valuing such traits as 자주 (Sovereignty) and 독립 (Independence). Anti-imperialism and pro-modernization for economic well-being were core themes for Koreans at that time.

The Soviet Army and the American Army were the close models for modernization that Korean people could see easily in 1945 easily for their life. Therefore, the Soviet Army, just like the US Army in South Korea, enjoyed great attention from North Koreans. Kim Il Sung and North Korean people wanted to develop their new country as a modern and strong state just like their enemy, Japan. In this context, the building of the KPA was clearly the most symbolic national modernization project. Korean people had aspirations to build their own national and modern army in the 1920s and 1930s during the colonial period. Building a Soviet-style modern army and improving Soviet-North Korea relations were significant projects for the North Korean government. The Pyongyang leadership believed that this great learning process would help modernize old Korea and make Korea strong and affluent. Just like pre-War Japanese society during the early 20th century, learning modern technology from developed countries was a social and cultural phenomenon in North Korean society in the late 1940's. Sovietization was an

attractive term in that society, and Russian language was a great skill for career development. Kim Il Sung himself was fluent in Russian language. I examine how strongly North Korean people and elites wanted to have Soviet-style modern armed forces and to learn modern technology from the Soviet Union by examining North Korean journals, magazines and translated Soviet doctrines and field manuals.

Finally, I argue that the building of the North Korean state, including the modernization national movement, was not a top-down government initiative, but an interactive process between government initiatives and the North Korean people, who strongly supported it. In the 1940's, North Korea was not today's garrison-police state. The new North Korean regime enjoyed popular support because the government-initiated national modernization project provided great upward mobility opportunities to poor peasants, workers and women. The new regimes needed new elites who were highly loyal. Russian historian Sheila Fitzpatrick argues that the large scale upward mobility in the Soviet Union in the 1930's is a key factor in understanding Stalin's popularity. She demonstrates that dictatorship of the proletariat was a chance for workers to become bosses.¹⁹² After liberation in 1945, pro-Japanese collaborationists mostly were removed from their high social status positions in workplaces. North Korea divided people into three classes and prevented people of hostile class (former landlords, white collar technicians and managers, and pro-Japanese collaborationists) from new high-middle level positions. The new North Korean regime filled these empty high and middle managers' positions with young people from poor working and peasant classes. The North Korean government not only provided jobs

¹⁹² Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), 1-9.

and study abroad opportunities (in the Soviet Union) to sons of poor peasant families and low-wage workers, but also reduced illiteracy rates and promoted women's rights.

As a new institution, the KPA was a symbol of this modernization project and provided not only secure jobs to young poor people to feed their families, but also personal opportunities to them to achieve career development. These new young people had strong passion, hope and aspiration for their new society. After liberation, the new society finally arrived in their everyday life. This does not mean that they enjoyed a high quality of life or they did not have complaints. I will show these young people's dreams, hopes and passions for their futures by examining personal letters of young people to their families.

The Soviet Union's War against Japan: Operation August Storm

Russia had a long history, including triumphant and humiliating moments, in the Far East area. Expansion to the Far East brought pride to Russians, because it made Russia the great Empire that occupied the Eurasian continent until the 20th century. From 20th Century, many Russian politicians and intellectuals began to have more interests in Asia and to become so-called Eurasianists. David Schimmelpenninck points out that:

St. Petersburg's interest in the Pacific was awakened by events over which it had no control, namely, China's spectacular defeat in its brief war with Japan in 1894-1895... To local officials in the Russian Federation's Pacific regions, who anxiously compare their nation's waning power to populous China's waxing self-confidence, the yellow peril has risen from the grave. Meanwhile, in Moscow some politicians call for closer ties with Peking and other Asian states on the grounds that Russia has more in common with them politically, economically, and culturally than "Atlanticists" like the United States. At the

same, time many intellectuals are increasingly fascinated by Eurasianism, the twentieth-century off-shoot of Asianism.¹⁹³

Russians' interests and good memories in Asia became humiliation after the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Russia ceded the southern half of Sakhalin Island, and gave up its imperial interest in Korea after the war. Russian hegemony was reduced in the Far Eastern area but Russia did not lose control over most of its Far Eastern territories. From this defeat, Russians felt humiliation. This war was the first defeat of the Russian Empire by an Asian country in the modern era after the Mongol Empire. The Russo-Japanese War seemed to be a collective psychological trauma to the Russian people. Putin still mentions this a threat to the Russian Far Eastern even today.¹⁹⁴ After Theodore Roosevelt negotiated a peace treaty between Russia and Japan to end the Russo-Japanese War, Washington accepted Japanese hegemony in Korea. As an additional condition for aiding Japan in securing gains in northeast Asia, Japan consented to America's claims in the Philippines. However, from the Korean perspective, Theodore Roosevelt wrongfully surrendered the Korean peninsula to the Japanese.

Before 1945, Stalin's Korean diplomacy was almost nonexistent. During the purge of 1936-1938, the Korean section of the Comintern was annihilated, and this purge eliminated Korea-related experts. Thus, Soviet policy towards Korea was a small part of Soviet policy towards China and Japan. Stalin was interested in ice-free ports and some territories as a security

¹⁹³ David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire on the Path to War with Japan* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001), 210-211. See *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010)

¹⁹⁴ Putin's speech about now fear of Asian people was connected with a general memorization of the historical experiences from the Russo-Japanese War and racism. See Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*. 2nd Edition. (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2010), 146.

buffer zone against a possible Japanese threat. Therefore, the Soviet military authorities did not fully decide its ultimate aims in Korea before 1945. Instead, Stalin accepted America's primary role in the Korean peninsula because his primary interests were in Manchuria, including Port Arthur, Dairen, the Manchurian railway and Sakhalin islands, along with American guarantees of participation in dividing former Japanese territory.¹⁹⁵

At the final stage of the Second World War, once again the leaders of the great powers felt entitled to determine the fate of northeastern Asia. America and Great Britain tried to encourage the Soviets to join the war against Japan as soon as possible. When the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, visited Moscow on 30 October, 1944, after the Soviet victories at Stalingrad and Kursk, Stalin told him that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan after Hitler's defeat.

To the Soviet Union, ice-free ports, railways and the right to use straits toward the Pacific were traditionally strategic interests in the Far Eastern area. In 1945, the four straits from the Pacific to the Soviet Union were not controlled by Moscow but by Tokyo. The Soviet Union had ample access to the Pacific Ocean further north, from Vladivostok, Kamchatka and in between. However, the following four straits were significant strategic area for possible conflicts between the Soviet Union and Japan or the US. The four straits are the strait between Sakhalin and the Russian mainland, the La Perouse Strait between Sakhalin and Hokkaido, the Tsugaru Strait between Hokkaido and Honshu, and the Tsushima Strait between Kyushu and Korea. Stalin wanted to restore a hegemony of the Soviet Union, including naval supremacy, in Northeast Asia and wanted to gain a strait toward the Pacific by winning the war against Japan.

¹⁹⁵ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 50.

During the meeting of American, British and the Soviet delegation on 15 and 17 October of 1944 in Moscow and the meeting between Stalin and US ambassador Harriman on 14 December of 1944 in Moscow, Stalin expressed his goals from the war in the Far East. He wanted the Soviet Union to lease the Manchurian railroads and to own Port Arthur, Dairen, the Kurile Islands, South Sakhalin and Outer Mongolia. Japan had about 760,000 soldiers in Manchuria and Korea in 1945. Tokyo could muster additional 1.2 million men. The Americans wanted Red Army to eliminate the Japanese threat there, but Stalin wanted to enter the war only two or three months after Germany's surrender. Because Russia had no formal territorial right to the Korean peninsula, Stalin did not mention the Korean issue. Through the Yalta conference and the Soviet agreement with Chiang Kai Shek, Stalin got everything he wanted in exchange for a promise to enter the war against Japan, thus restoring Russia's holdings prior to 1904. On 5 April, Moscow abrogated the neutrality pact with Japan and on 8 May Germany surrendered. Now, it was time to make a military plan for the war against Japan.¹⁹⁶ Stalin's major target from this operation was to get North-Eastern ports and some security buffer zones against Japan.

Operation August Storm was the Red Army's most successful operation during the Second World War. This operation was the masterpiece of *Deep Operation* of the Red Army, and soldiers and officers were at the peak of their war capabilities after the bloody war against Nazi Germany in the European theater. After defeating Nazi Germany, the Red Army had confidence that it could destroy any armed forces, and it was arguably the strongest ground force on the planet. The Red Army's strategic offensive in the Far East proved to be a logical climax to the development of Soviet offensive military theory throughout the European war. Experienced and thoroughly competent front, army, corps, division, brigade, and regimental commanders,

¹⁹⁶ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 33-41.

whose mettle had been tested and expertise had been forged in the most prolonged and fierce struggle in modern military history, led Soviet forces in Manchuria. The Far East Command's military leaders generally conducted their operations with unanticipated flexibility, audacity, and individual initiative and, as a result, won a significant victory¹⁹⁷. The Operation August Storm model fundamentally shaped Soviet military strategy, operational art, and tactics for generations to come, particularly regarding strategic regrouping, the nature of initial periods of war, the nature and form of potential theater strategic offensives, and conduct of modern operational and tactical maneuvers.¹⁹⁸

Operation August Storm began at one minute past midnight on 9 August 1945 based on the agreements at Tehran and Yalta, occurring between the atomic bombings of Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9. For political and military reasons, Manchuria had to be secured within 30 days and the main entrances into central Manchuria within one week. Because the Soviets anticipated that the Japanese Empire might collapse rapidly as a result of the American use of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union needed to achieve its goal before the Japanese collapsed. The Red Army applied the advanced tactical and operational techniques it had learned in the brutal school of war in the west and displayed the requisite degree of audacious leadership Soviet commanders had laboriously developed during the campaigns in the west. The Manchurian Campaign represented and still represents the highest stage of military art the Red Army reached during its operations during the Second World War.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ David M. Glantz, *The Soviet Strategic Offensive in Manchuria, 1945 'August Storm'* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 339.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 345.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, xxvi.

The main area of Red Army operations in Europe was located more than 6,200 miles away from Manchuria. Soviet military planners had to move forces, weaponry, and other equipment to Manchuria along a fragile transportation network, the Trans-Siberian railroad. To guarantee success in the Manchurian operation, the General Staff believed it had to increase its military strength in the Far East to a total of more than 1.5 million soldiers.²⁰⁰ Stalin requested that the Western Allies provide all of the necessary supplies by the end of June 1945 and agreed to commence operations against Japanese forces in Manchuria approximately three months after the capitulation of Germany.²⁰¹

The *Stavka* (The Supreme Command of the USSR) created a unified theater command structure and manned it with commanders and staffs whose experience suited them to control massive forces operating across a broad front in the challenging and diverse terrain and weather conditions of Manchuria²⁰². When assigning forces to the Far East Command, the *Stavka* was astute enough to select forces to conduct operations in specific regions of Manchuria based on their experience in conducting operations in similar regions in the west.²⁰³ Successful strategic deception would be a large factor determining Soviet success or failure. In August, most Japanese commanders believed that the Red Army would not be able to launch an offensive until the fall of 1945 or the spring of 1946.²⁰⁴ The Soviet Far East Command decided to commit the Trans-Baikal and the 1st Far Eastern Front in simultaneous offensives into Manchuria from west

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 14.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, 12.

²⁰² *Ibid*, 343.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, 122.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 43.

and east.²⁰⁵ In the Trans-Baikal Front's sector opposite western Manchuria, the Japanese did not expect an attack across the entire length of the Gran Khingan Mountains.²⁰⁶

Soviet depiction of Far East Command Operation Plan included an attack towards the Korean peninsula because the Japanese army was based there, but their advance plan stopped before reaching Seoul. This attack was aimed at destroying the Japanese Army, not occupying territory, and this advancement of the 25th Army was a support attack.²⁰⁷

Young Soviet Captain Kim Il Sung and his Korean colleagues planned to participate in this operation, but it was cancelled because the Japanese Empire surrendered quickly. Kim Il Sung was the head of the Korean mission group under the 88th Special Brigade. Under the Far Eastern High Command, where Marshal A. M. Vasilevskii held the position of commander, the 1st Far Eastern Front charged towards the Korean peninsula on three fronts (2nd Far Eastern Front and Transbaikal Front). Under the 1st Far Eastern Command, the 25th Army lay along a 285 kilometers long front running from the mouth of the Tumen River along the minuscule Soviet-Korean border.²⁰⁸ The 393rd and the 335th Infantry Divisions were confronted by the Japanese 17th Front and were mainly infantry units engaged in actual battles in Korea. Commander Isakov's 393rd Division crossed the Soviet-Korean border on the night of 11 and 12 of August and took Nanam on 17 August and Puryong on 18 August. Between 17 and 19 of August, the Southern Group of the 25th Army crossed the border into Korea. Wonsan was occupied on 22

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 144.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 150.

²⁰⁷ 전현수, “소련군의 북한 진주와 대 북한정책.” *한국독립운동사연구* 9 (December, 1995), 348.

²⁰⁸ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 55.

August, and the war was over. Some 3,000 ethnically Korean soldiers were in the Red Army when the Red Army entered Korea.²⁰⁹

For the Soviet Union, Operation August Storm was successful, not only on the battlefield, but also in the peace that followed. After the war, the Kremlin enjoyed their spoils what they achieved from the war against Japan. The Soviet Union obtained ice-free ports and unlimited access through the specific sea straits to the Pacific Ocean. The Soviet Union took possession of gained South Sakhalin and the Kuril islands, Northern Hokkaido, the Tsugaru strait and the Tsushima Strait. Stalin's interests remained above the 38th Parallel. The Korean peninsula was still of second importance to Stalin compared to Manchuria and Japan. Therefore, the Red Army did not cross the 38th Parallel.

The Soviet Union in a Society

The Soviet occupation authority did not establish a military government over North Korea, but ruled North Korea through Koreans. The Soviet Union skillfully and indirectly governed North Korea with the expertise of local people, leading to less resistance in a former colonial zone. This indirect policy rule was a product of pre-1945 Soviet experiences in the treatment of Central Asian minorities and Outer Mongolia.²¹⁰

Stalin saw the Korean situation as a part of his global security strategy. Stalin's top projects did not include Korea, but rather focused on the economic recovery of the Soviet Union,

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 62-65.

²¹⁰ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 42-43.

the new world order against the US, obtaining atomic weapons and the situation in Europe, including the reunification of Germany, the Marshall Plan, and NATO. Therefore, the Soviet Union did not want to directly lead the pro-Soviet regime in Korea, which could trigger a reaction on the part of the US and its allies in Korea. The basic occupation policies of the Soviet Union in occupation zones were not directly governing, but local people's governing to build a pro-Soviet communist regime.

The Korea situation differed from that of Eastern Europe. The Soviet military authorities conducted the policy of Sovietization with support of local Communists in Eastern Europe and Chinese Manchuria. All these countries had some local Communist politicians who spent a long time in exile in Moscow and had close contacts in Soviet political circles. However, only a few separate Communists worked underground in South of Korea during the 1930's and 1940's after the dissolution of the Communist party of Korea in 1928 by the Japanese. No Korean communists had close contacts with Kremlin political circles before 1945.²¹¹

On October 3 of 1945, the Soviet Union established the SCV for Korean affairs. The SCV's main function was administrative and occupational and its aim was indirectly governing the Northern part of Korea until the Korean government could be established. The Soviet Union generally led its occupation well because it had its own political commissar to conduct a political function in an occupation zone. At that time, the Soviet Union occupied many foreign territories in Eastern Europe with its advances towards Berlin. The SCV was not officially a military administration but its members were largely former political commissars of military units which

²¹¹ Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 10, 17.

occupied that region. Its mission was generally indirect governing and assisting to establish a national communist party and government.

The SCV was directly subordinated to the Military Council of the Maritime Military District. The heart of the SCV was the Directorate and it consisted of five departments, including communications, finance, transport, agriculture, and industry. Romanenko supervised five departments and Ignat'ev supervised general departments, including education, culture, justice, health and the press. The SCV was an offshoot of the 25th Army and its apparatus consisted fully of ranking officers.²¹² The SCV included 13 departments and 78 men. The SCV controlled more than 1,182 men, including security guards and people of the press offices.²¹³

The Soviet authorities established the headquarters of the Soviet Forces in North Korea in Pyongyang on 26 August 1945, and the commander of the Soviet 25th Army, Colonel General Ivan Chistiakov, took charge of the occupation command. Major General Andrei Alekseevich Romanenko controlled the Soviet Civil Administration (SCV) department of the 25th Army, and Major-General N.G. Lebedev, a political commissar of the 25th Army, was one of the triumvirate in the Soviet occupation authority. In April 1947, Lieutenant-General G. P. Korotkov was appointed as a successor of Chistiakov, a commander of the 25th Army. Neither Korotkov nor Chistiakov took part in North Korean politics, but Lebedev seriously influenced North Korean

²¹² Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 102-105.

²¹³ 전현수, “소련군의 북한 진주와 대 북한정책,” 359. More details on the SCV were researched in the book of Eric Van Rhee and Chun Hyun Soo's article based on Russian primary sources.

politics.²¹⁴ With Lebedev, Major-General Romanenko and Colonel-General Terentii Shtykov deeply engaged in North Korean issues.

Shtykov was the most powerful Soviet Korean authority because he was a political commissar of the Far Eastern Military District and had abundant experience in party political affairs. Shtykov visited Pyongyang many times and had a major impact on the decision making processes among Koreans and the functioning of the Soviet authorities in North Korea. Shtykov was born in 1907 into a peasant family, and he joined the Party in 1929. He became the second secretary of the Leningrad regional party committee in 1938. He was close to A. A. Zhdanov, the Leningrad party boss, who was Stalin's principal lieutenant and even a likely successor. Because of Zhdanov's support, Shtykov enjoyed rapid career progress. Because of his close connection with Zhdanov, he was able to directly communicate with Zhdanov and Stalin in Moscow from Pyongyang.²¹⁵ When speaking of Soviet people who directly assisted in the construction of a new Korea, Shtykov comes to mind first.²¹⁶ Shtykov was the crucial man supervising the whole Korean operation, sometimes behind the scenes and sometimes in the full spotlight of international publicity.²¹⁷ Shtykov played an extremely important role in shaping North Korean state building and represented the North Korean elites' view to the Kremlin from the field and front line.²¹⁸ Because of his role representing Korea's interest and Kim Il Sung's opinion, Stalin warned him that he was not Korean but Russian. Because Shtykov was close to Stalin, Kim Il

²¹⁴ Lankov. *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 2.

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, 2-3.

²¹⁶ Vanin, Iu. V., eds. *The Liberation of Korea. Reminiscences and Articles* (Moscow, 1976), 79.

²¹⁷ Van Rhee, *Socialism in One Zone*, 101-102.

²¹⁸ 기광서, 슈티코프, 해방 후 북소관계의 실력자." *내일을 여는 역사* 24 (June, 2006); 142-154. ; "해방 후 소련의 대한반도정책과 슈티코프의 활동." *중소연구* 93 (May, 2002), 161-192.

Sung enjoyed using Shtykov to deliver his message and opinion to Stalin. After all, Shtykov was fired because Stalin was angry with his role as a representative of Korea during the war.²¹⁹

However, after him, Kim Il Sung did not have a powerful figure who was close to the head of the Soviet Union because Shtykov's successor, Vladimir N. Razubaev, was not in the same position as Shtykov in the Kremlin. Razubaev's lesser political power led to more difficult communication between Moscow and Pyongyang during the war.

In addition to Lebedev, Romanenko and Shtykov, A. M. Ignatiev, G. M. Balasanov and A. I. U. Shabshin played important roles in Soviet relations with North Korea. Ignatiev was the deputy chief for political affairs of the SCV and the key figure in the creation of the North Korean Worker's Party. Balasanov led the administration of the political advisor, and Shabshin worked with South Korean Communist networks. The staffs of the 7th department of the Political Administration of the 25th Army (under the political commissar, not under the commander) worked psychological operations and maintained contact with local authorities of North Korea. The 25th Army initially considered future operations in North Korea as a purely military matter, and Korea had never been high on the agenda of the Kremlin. When the 25th Army entered North Korea, there were no Korean interpreters in the 25th Army, and the commander of the 25th Army knew nothing about Korea.²²⁰

Two primary sources recently revealed – Shtykov's diaries and reports of the SCV on the political situation of South Korea from 1946 to 1947- reveal the roles and activities of the SCV from 1945 to 1948. Shtykov's diaries were discovered and collected at Shtykov's son's

²¹⁹ 전현수, “특별연구 「쉬띠코프 일기」가 말하는 북한정권의 성립과정.” *역사비평* 32 (August, 1995): 133-162. ; “한국현대사와 소련의 역할(1945~1948), <<쉬띠코프일기>>연구.” *경북사학* 27 (August, 2004): 1-28.

²²⁰ *Ibid*, 4-5.

home in Russia in 1995 by Dr. Chun Hyun Su when he studied in Russia. These diaries were edited by the National Institute of Korean History in 2004.²²¹ Some parts of these diaries were briefly introduced in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin of Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington D.C.²²² Unfortunately, diaries from 1949 to 1950, the most significant time for North Korea's invasion plan, were missing. It is not known how carefully Stalin read all reports from the SCV of Korea about daily situations of the Korean peninsula because Stalin's multiple interests included from Europe and Middle East to Africa and Asia (India and Northeast Asia) and millions of daily reports were generated.

First, the SCV reports reveal that the Soviet Union closely watched details of the political situation of the Korean peninsula, including North and South, and regularly reported many details of Korea's situation to the Kremlin.²²³ Regular reports from the South Korean Worker's Party to the SCV included activities of all political parties, politicians, activities of the US military administration, the labor movement and the economic situation in South Korea. Secondly, diaries reveal the missions and activities of the SCV between 1945 and 1948.

Although these source demonstrates the Soviet leadership's attention to multiple aspects of the situation in Korea, they also show the SCV's limited role. Officially the SCV did not govern North Korea because it was technically governed by the North Korean provisional government, the so-called Provisional People's Committee for North Korea. The Provisional People's Committee for North Korea was formed under Kim Il Sung in February of 1946. The

²²¹국사편찬위원회, *쉬띠코프 일기, 1946-1948* (서울: 국사편찬위원회, 2004)

²²² Hyun-soo with Gyoo Kahng. The Shytykov Diaries. See "New Evidence on the Korean War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter, 1995/1996): 69, 92-93.

²²³ 국사편찬위원회, *소련군정문서, 남조선 정세보고서, 1946-1947. 러시아 연방 국방성 중앙문서보관소* (서울: 국사편찬위원회, 2003)

Soviet Union allowed these committees to function until the DPRK foundation on September 9 of 1948. The SCV guided North Korea via the Korean people. Because the Soviet Union did not want to be seen as an occupation force to the Korean people, the Soviet Union guided North Korea and built a pro-Communist government via Korean people step by step. These committees enjoyed a high degree of autonomy and conducted their works with high passion with their vision of a new modern state in their home land. Therefore, these committees were guided by the SCV; these committees had power and actually governed North Korea under the guidance of the SCV, including through the land reform of 1946.²²⁴ The building of the KPA was one of the key tasks of the Korean people in these committees. While the SCV skillfully guided the people's committee to build a pro-Soviet communist regime in the northern zone of Korea, the US military administration was in chaos because of its dynamic political situation of South Korea, which included uprisings and massive protests in the Fall of 1946 and political struggles between more diverse political factions and parties than North Korea.

The SCV needed the Korean leader. The Soviet Union first considered more experienced and well-known senior leader, Cho Man Sik, a well-known Christian Nationalist and the most famous independence movement figure in North Korea than young and inexperienced Kim Il Sung. Cho Man Sik was more popular among Koreans. Cho Man Sik was born in 1883 and studied law at Maiji University in Japan. Young Cho became Christian and his role model for independent movement of Korea was Mahatma Gandhi. He graduate from Maiji University in 1913 and became a teacher and a principal of Osan school in Pyongan Province when he came back to Korea. He participated in 3.1 Independent Movement in 1919 and was imprisoned in a

²²⁴기광서, “특집: 역사용어 바로 쓰기, 소군정은 실재했는가.” *역사비평* 73 (November, 2005): 77-82.

prison for a year. He continually led an independent movement against Japan and became the Chief Executive of Joseon Newspaper in 1932. After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, he became the most prominent leader of liberation movement in North Korea. Although the Soviet Union considered Kim Il Sung as a good candidate for a leader of North Korea, they considered the popularity and authority of Cho Man Sik among Korean people in North Korea. Therefore, the Soviet Union did not choose Kim Il Sung as the leader of North Korea when they entered North Korea in August of 1945.

The SCV tried to make Cho Man Sik as a pro-Soviet leader of North Korea. The SCV wanted a popular senior leader and did not want to be seen as occupation forces by Korean people. Therefore, the Soviet Union contacted Cho Man Sik with their reliable men, Kim Il Sung and Ch'oe Yong'gon, who were Soviet soldiers of the 88th special brigade and potential political candidates for North Korean leadership. Because Kim Il Sung's family and Ch'oe Yong-gon's family already knew Cho Man Sik as friends, Kim Il Sung and Ch'oe Yong-gon tried to make Cho Man Sik as a symbolic political leader of North Korea. Kim Il Sung and Ch'oi Yong-gon directly met with Cho Man Sik many times instead of the Soviet administrators. Kim Il Sung and Ch'oi Yong-gon were very polite to old Cho Man Sik and did not disrespect him as a political rival. Cho Man Sik firstly cooperated with the Soviet Union because of efforts of the Soviet Union, Kim Il Sung and Ch'oi Yong-gon.

The Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain agreed a five-year trusteeship of Korea at the Moscow conference in December 1945. All Korean people were angry because a five-year trusteeship was decided by three foreign countries without Korean representatives and Korean people wanted their own national government as soon as possible. All Koreans, including right and left wing parties, firstly opposed this five-year trusteeship and massive

demonstrations started all over the country. However, left wings parties, including communists, changed their views and they started demonstrations to support a five-year trusteeship.

Cho Man Sik, the nationalist, strongly opposed a five-year trusteeship. The Soviet Union needed Cho Man Sik's endorsement for a five-year trusteeship. In early 1946, the Soviet Union and Kim Il Sung many times tried to persuade Cho Man Sik to cooperate with the issue of a five year trusteeship. However, this was unpopular with Korean people and led to a massive protest and uprising against the five-year trusteeship all over the country. Therefore, Cho Man Sik strongly rejected his endorsement and cooperation regarding this issue, just like any other non- communist political figures in South Korea. The Soviet Union gave up Cho as a leader of North Korea and arrested and detained him in Pyongyang's Koryo Hotel. After this, the Soviet Union completely backed Kim Il Sung. Cho Man Sik stood and failed in the vice-presidency election in 1948 and died in the early period of the Korean War.

As the Soviets' willingness to attempt to co-opt Cho demonstrates, they had to deal with the reality of the dearth of Korean Communists upon whom to rely. Right-wing nationalist' political leaders, such as Syngman Rhee and Kim Ku, were far more influential in the northern part of Korea than any of the Communists. After their failure in gaining Cho's cooperation, the Soviet authorities had no choice but to create a local Communist party. However, Pak Hon-yong in the South was the only prominent Communist leader in all of Korea, and there was no prominent local Communist in the North. Consequently, the Soviets turned to Kim Il Sung as the best available person, even though he was not a deeply ideological Marxist-Leninist, but rather nationalist and a pragmatist. Similarly to many Asian communists, Kim Il Sung set as his primary objective the building of a strong modern nation state, capable of standing against imperialism and colonialism. Kim Il Sung's number one enemy was future aggressive foreign

invaders, rather than bourgeois owners of means of production. As a result, Kim Il Sung designated the KPA primarily to defend his motherland and to serve as a symbol of the modernization of society.

The people of North Korea had a love-hate relationship with the Soviet Union. The Red Army was liberated their land and dispelled the Japanese forces, earning gratitude from Koreans. Nonetheless, the early stages of the Red Army also had dark associations to people of North Korea. As in other theaters of operations, Red Army soldiers raped many women and were not discouraged by their commanding officers. Many Japanese women were raped by the soldiers of the Red Army in Manchuria between 1945 and 1946.²²⁵ Although rapes of Korean women did not occur as frequently, the people of North Korea were angry and disappointed with the soldiers of the Red Army at the very early stage of the occupation period. In general, the soldiers of the Red Army ignored the Korea's poor and desperate situation and displayed racist behavior. Ju young bok, former KPA soldier, remembers that the soldiers of the Red Army treated the Korea people unequally and ignored them in every aspect. In the unit, there were always conflicts and fighting between the soldiers of the Red Army and North Korean people.²²⁶ The Soviets were hardly different from Americans, however. American soldiers saw Korean people as 'laundry men' and called them 'gook.'

Park Byongyeop, former high rank official of the North Korean Worker's Party, remembers that the significant numbers of the Soviet enlisted men and NCOs of the Far East were former felons from prisons. The Soviet army had to fill human sources from prisons

²²⁵ Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 44. ; 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 338-352.

²²⁶ 주영복, *내가 겪은 조선전쟁*, 100.

because most of the trained Soviet regular soldiers were stationed in the European theater. Park reflects that the Soviet soldiers ravaged many Korean properties and food, including a generator from a water power plant. One Korean worker was shot by the Soviet soldier because he blocked the Soviet soldier from bringing the generator from one water power plant of North Korea to the Soviet Union.²²⁷ Therefore, ordinary Korean people wanted a real liberation without any foreign intervention and influence after 35 years colonial period.

Overall, however, Soviet disdain for Koreans did not become a serious issue. In the larger context, Koreans thought that the Soviet Union was a great supporter of North Korea and a role model of a modern-state. North Korea aspired to the Koreanization of the Soviet communist system, not the Sovietization of North Korea.²²⁸ They yearned for an independent modern state, escaping from thousands of years of Chinese influence and decades of the Japanese colonial period.

Modernization (Sovietization) of a Society

When the Japanese retreated, they destroyed 1,015 of 1,034 small and medium-sized enterprises on the territory of North Korea.²²⁹ The Soviet authorities and later Kim Il Sung had to rebuild the North Korean economy. Kim Il Sung and Koreans in general wanted to modernize the society, economically, culturally and technologically. No Koreans advocated restoring the Joseon dynasty after the 35 year-long Japanese colonization, even while they aspired for the

²²⁷ 박병엽, *박병엽 증언록 1 조선민주주의인민공화국의 탄생: 전 노동당 고위간부가 겪은 건국 비화* (서울: 선인, 2010), 26-29.

²²⁸ Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 241.

²²⁹ Lankov, *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung*, 5.

reestablishment of an independent nation-state. They associated the late Joseon dynasty period with poverty and backwardness. Modernization was an imperative in Korea at that time, as it had been for Japan in the early 20th century, but the ideal model in the North became the Soviet Union, while in the South it was the United States. Thus, the Sovietization of North Korea and the Americanization of South Korea constitute basically similar social trends. Kim Il Sung's many speeches were about the modernization of North Korea and he emphasized that Korean people had to learn many things from the Soviet Union. Charles Armstrong, a historian of North Korea, points out that the Soviet model of successful and independent industrialization was seen as the best solution to the linked problems of colonial subjection and backwardness.²³⁰ The KPA building was the climactic project of the modernization social and cultural trend of North Korea. The people's army was the symbol of advanced science and technology borrowed from the Soviet Union.

Air-plane technology was one of the symbols for the government-initiative modernization project. Just like in the Russian during the early 20th century, the air-plane was the iconic symbol to show modern technology and science among people. Airplanes were emblematic of modernization in Russian society. Historian of Russian aviation Scott palmer points out:

As the preeminent embodiments of technological modernization, aviation images and institutions were integral to Russian's views of themselves, their nation, and their place in the world...I propose that the airplane's influence in shaping Russian identity was not limited to the Stalinist era. Rather it has been a continuous and essential feature of modern Russian culture, one that has

²³⁰ Armstrong, *The North Korean revolution, 1945-1950*, 2.

structured public and private understanding of progress and legitimacy from the dawn of the air age to the present day.²³¹

North Korean people towards air planes had same feeling like Russians at that time. Although North people already familiar with air planes during the Japanese colonial period, people's own national air planes had a totally different meaning to people.



Figure 3: Title Page of People's Air Plane, 1948²³²



Figure 4: Title Page of People's Air Plane, 1948²³³

²³¹ Scott Palmer, *Dictatorship of the Air: aviation culture and the fate of modern Russia* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7. ; Kendall Bailes, *Technology and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: Origins of the Soviet Technical Intelligentsia, 1917-1941* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 381-406.

²³² NARA RG 242, SA 2010, Box 5, Item 52, *인민항공* (People's Air Plane) No. 2, Issue. 3 (1948.12.28)

²³³ NARA RG 242, SA 2007, Box 8, Item 99A, *인민항공* (People's Air Plane) No. 2, Issue 5 (1948.12.28)

Thus, the North Korean government published the journal *인민항공* (*People's Air Plane*). On May, 1948, the government hosted a mobile airplane competition and *인민항공* celebrated the event and included the pictures of event (below).



Figure 5: Title Page of People's Air Plane, 1948²³⁴

Figure 6: Mobile Airplane Competition Event, 1948²³⁵

인민항공 included diverse essays and articles about not only the Soviet Union's advanced air technology and heroic stories about pilots, but also the pride of the national people's army. Kim Il Sung gave a speech called "Let Us Create the Air Force of the New Korea" at the Sinuiju Branch of the Aviation Association of Korea on November 29, 1945:

We should create a people's air force as quickly as possible to reliably defend the skies of the new Korea. We should establish air routes so that Koreans can travel by air. In our country, however, people acquainted with aeronautical techniques are very scarce at present. In the past, Koreans had no opportunity of learning these techniques. It is very good that you are learning aeronautics, and this can be regarded as a precious bud in building a new country. Just as the peasants sow and look after the buds with great care, so must this bud be nursed carefully to form an air force of the new Korea, enabling our young people to fly

²³⁴ NARA RG 242, SA 2007, Box 9, Item 99B, *인민항공* (*People's Air Plane*) No. 2, Issue. 6 (1948.12.28)

²³⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

the skies of the motherland at will. You have a serious responsibility in creating air force. You should be the seed and the bud of the Korean air force to be set up in the future.²³⁶

Modernization took diverse forms, beyond the building of air power and the army.

Because Koreans believed that colonization had resulted from the lack of modernization and the rejection of openness door during the late Joseon period, they strongly aspired to learn modern technology abroad. Yet, at that time, North Korea was still a peasant society. Communist organizations in some countries rejected certain people from membership because of their class origin, and actively recruited other people, especially workers and peasants instead. Thus, in order to gain a party membership in other communist countries, some people lied about their social origin. However, North Korea's situation was different. Ho Ka-i, former communist party organizer of the Soviet Union and later the top post of the North Korean Workers' Party, tried to recruit small numbers of passionate workers, not massive peasants. However, Kim Il Sung criticized that Ho Ka-i ignored the situation of North Korea, large numbers of peasants and small numbers of industrial workers because of lack of industrial base. Kim Il Sung emphasized the local circumstance and a mass party with massive party memberships, including even officer workers, businessmen, landlords and religious believers, and opposed a small party consisting of small workers. Therefore, this shows that Kim Il Sung's pragmatic approach regarding the building of the party. In this context, the membership situation represented social origins of North Koreans at that time. For instance, the composition of the people's committee membership in North Korea on September of 1946 was as follows: Workers (5.7%), Peasants (71.8%), Office

²³⁶ Foreign Language Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 1: June 1930-December 1945* (Pyongyang, Korea: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1980), 403-404. "Let Us Create The Air Force of the New Korea" Speech of Encouragement at the Sinuiju Branch of the Aviation Association of Korea, November 29, 1945.

workers (15.8%), Handicraftsmen (2.1 %), Tradesmen (4.6%).²³⁷ When the elections for the provincial, city and county people's committees ended on November 3 of 1946, the total elected members were 3,459 persons and election result was as follows: Workers (510 men, 14.7%), Peasants (1256 men, 36.4%), Office employees (1056 men, 30.5%), Cultural workers (311 men, 9 %), Merchants (145, 4.2%), Entrepreneurs (73 men, 2.1%), Religious believers (94 men, 2.7%), Former landlords (14men, 0.4%). Interestingly, office employees, religious believers, and former landlords were elected at the time of November, 1946.

Women were 453 and 13.1 % in the membership committee of September 1946. Increasing women's rights was another key component of the modernization project. Kim Il Sung stated, "The women who, though equal human beings, were not treated as such but were downtrodden in the old feudal and colonial Korea, have now legitimately entered the political arena in the new Korea and have sent a large number of representatives to the organs of people's power."²³⁸ Ju Young Bok, a former KPA soldier, remembers that women's rights and positions, such as nursing officers, increased in the people's army between 1945 and 1950. However, women's rights still did not equal of men as a result of the legacy of a male-dominated culture.²³⁹

Another election result for people's sub-county committee in 1947 was as follows: Workers (1121, 8.33%), Peasants (7795, 57.97%), White-collar workers (3901, 29%), Intellectuals (310, 2.3 %), Merchants (228, 1.69%), Entrepreneurs (48, 0.35%), Clergy (40, 0.29%), former landlords (1, 0.07%); men numbered (11458, 85.23%) and women numbered

²³⁷ Foreign Language Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 2: January-December 1946* (Pyongyang, Korea: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1980), 385.

²³⁸ *Ibid*, 484. "The Results of the Democratic Elections and the Immediate Tasks of The People's Committee, speech delivered at the Third Enlarged Meeting of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea, November 25, 1946."

²³⁹ 주영복, *내가 겪은 조선전쟁*, 180.

1986 (14.77%).²⁴⁰ Although the society remained predominantly peasant, participants in the modernization project had opportunity to be technicians, experts, and workers in industrial work places and the people's army.

Decreasing the illiteracy rate for citizens of all ages constituted another part of the modernization project.²⁴¹ At that time, one common scene in a society that elderly female peasants and young women with their babies studied in the classroom and Kim Il Sung's university female student taught them.²⁴² The modernization movement, thus, was not only about high technology and industrial skills to support the army but also about reducing the illiteracy rate and educating women and peasants. People supported this modernization movement because they benefitted from them.

The North Korean government published the first issue of *조선 여성* (Korean Women) in September 1946.²⁴³ Many women had opportunities to be representatives in people's committee, teachers at schools, judges at courts, doctors at hospitals, and college students at college. For instance, 11,509 women were people's Committee representatives, 33 women were representatives at Supreme People's Assembly, 53 women were doctors and 1,363 women were judges and more than 5,000 women were elementary and middle school teachers in 1950.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ Foreign Language Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 2: January-December 1947* (Pyongyang, Korea: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1980), 163. "The Results of the Elections to the People's Committees at All Levels And the Central Tasks For the Future, Report to the 30th Session of the People's Committee of North Korea, March 22, 1947."

²⁴¹ Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 98-104.

²⁴² 박병엽, *박병엽 증언록 1 조선민주주의인민공화국의 탄생: 전 노동당 고위간부가 겪은 건국 비화*, 173.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, 188.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 198.; NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Box 3, Item 150, "Report on the 39th anniversary of March 8 International Women's Day," Central Committee of North Korean Democratic Women's League (March 1950), 15-17.

Nonetheless, vast majority of women were still peasants and housewives. Suzy Kim points out that men still dominated the higher-paid jobs and took the jobs with highest prestige in North Korea from 1945 to 1950, but the government continually led to a women's liberation movement and used the symbol of motherhood as the ideal sacrificing citizen.²⁴⁵

The government tried to develop learning modern technology and science primary from the Soviet Union. Between 1945 and 1950, the Soviet Union was the major trading partner of North Korea. The Soviet Union offered not only technical training and assistance to North Korea but also economic aid, such as industrial machinery, plant equipment, raw materials, and fuel for rebuilding its economy. The following table shows Soviet Aid to North Korea between 1946 and 1950.

Year	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Amount	740	148	265	347	684

Table 10: Soviet Aid to North Korea between 1946 and 1950 (Millions of Rubles)²⁴⁶

North Korea sent raw materials to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union offered finished goods. In that period, Soviet exports were almost equal to North Korea's entire budget. North Korea's economy depended largely on the Soviet Union. The following table shows North Korean exports and imports from the Soviet Union and China in 1946 and 1947.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 201-202.

²⁴⁶ Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 153. United States Military, Far East Command. Record Group 332, Box 23, G-2 Periodic Report no. 194. 8.

Year	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Total(Rubles)	74,052,000	148,400,000	264,905,000	340,525,000	684,210,000
Increase (%)	100%	204%	357.7%	459.8%	937.5%

Table 11: Trade between the Soviet Union and North Korea²⁴⁷

Between 1945 and 1950, trade between the Soviet Union and North Korea largely increased. Human exchanges increased because young North Korean men and women went to the Soviet Union to learn technological skills for industry and the armed forces. Thus, from 1945 to 1950, Russian language was important in North Korea, much like the English language in South Korea. Kim Il Sung and Park Hun Young were fluent in Russian language. Therefore, the North Korean government emphasized amity between the Soviet Union and North Korea. For instance, Kim Il Sung built the Korea-Soviet Cultural Association in November 1945 and the membership of it reached to some 850,000.²⁴⁸ Nonetheless, while amity between China and Korea was natural because of similar ethnicity, food, customs, linguistic characters and a shared history, amity between the Soviet Union and North Korea was artificial. The North Korean government created diverse government publications, including *조소친선* (Korea-Soviet Amity), and cultural events between people of two nations, such as a dancing event with young people from both nations.

²⁴⁷ 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2: 기원과 원인*, 772; 조선 노동당 출판사, *김일성 선집* Volume 2 (Pyongyang, North Korea: 조선 노동당 출판사, 1953), 363, 533.

²⁴⁸ Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 153. ; Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 130.

Figure 7: Appreciation Ceremony to the Soviet Union, 1949²⁴⁹Figure 8: The KPA Parade, 1949²⁵⁰

For instance, on the fourth anniversary of liberation on August 15, 1949, Pyongyang staged a big military parade and people celebrated the building of a strong national army. Kim Il Sung's regime did not forget to host an appreciation ceremony for its liberator, the Soviet Union, during the event. The picture collection of 1949 documented diverse liberation ceremonies and events, including sport events. Many pages of the collection depicted the KPA parade, focusing on modern military equipment, such as trucks, automobiles, machineguns, artillery, naval equipment and tanks. The DPRK regime and Korean people in North Korea were very proud to have their own modern national army and modern military equipment.

²⁴⁹ NARA RG 242, Box 8, File No. 200694, *Joseon Hwabo* (Joseon Picture Collection) Issue 2, 1949, August 30, 1949, 3.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 2.



Figure 9: The KPA Parade at the 4th Anniversary of Liberation, 1949²⁵¹ Figure 10: The KPA Parade, 1949²⁵²

Nodongja (Worker), a publication of the party's central committee. The issue 10 of *Nodongja*, published a special issue (No.10 of 1949) about Soviet Union – North Korea amity. The title page depicted a generous older Soviet teacher or advisor and a young North Korean learner. This was a typical image of relations between the Soviet Union and North Korea at this time – generous teachers/ advisors and passionate learners. This edition even included a special song, titled *Song for Amity between the Soviet Union and North Korea*. This artificial cultural amity strategy of the new North Korean regime continued until the beginning of the Korean War.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, 1.

²⁵² *Ibid*, 4.



Figure 11: The Title Page of *Worker*, 1949²⁵³ Figure 12: The Song for Amity - the Soviet Union and North Korea²⁵⁴

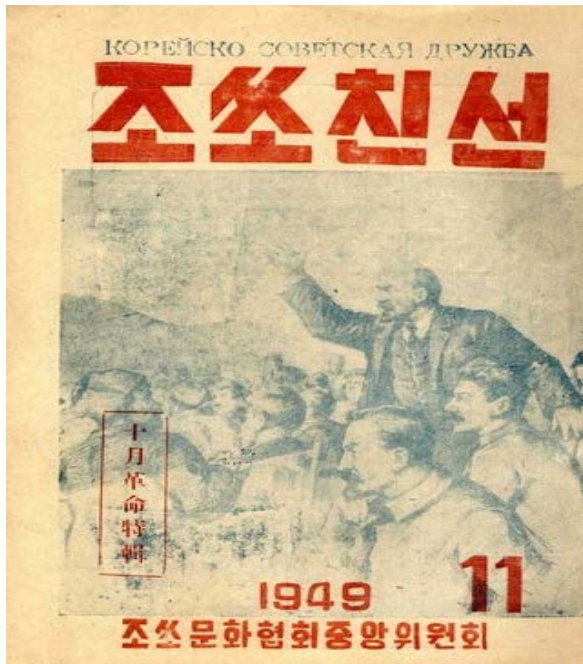
In this edition, many writings focused on amity between the two countries and emphasized how North Korean people learn from the Soviet Union. For instance, one article stressed the creative force of the Soviets' patriotism (p. 9 -11); another contained testimony on workers of the Soviet Union, including their enhanced cultural life (p.23-36). Another article consisted of one Soviet worker's description of the happy lives of Soviet mine workers (p.45-49).²⁵⁵

The next issue of *조소친선* (Korea-Soviet Amity), in November, No. 11 of 1949 featured. Lenin, Stalin and the Revolution in Russia on the title page. It included a new song for Korea-Soviet amity, "Long Live Russia."

²⁵³ NARA RG 242, Box 8, File No. 200694, *Nodongja* (Worker) Issue 10, 1949, August 30, 1949.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 4.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 9-11, 23-36, 45-49.

Figure 13: The Title Page of *Korea-Soviet Amity*²⁵⁶Figure 14: The Song "Long Live Russia"²⁵⁷

In addition to the magazine devoted explicitly to Soviet-Korean friendship, many other North Korean publications promoted the same message. One governmental publication titled “The Soviet Union was the greatest state.” Another *Newspaper on the Soviet Union* was published twice per week by the Soviet cultural embassy in Pyongyang. The editor was a Russian government official. Issue No. 64 of *Newspaper on the Soviet Union* included the news of the Soviet Union with the objective to enhance amity between the Soviet Union and Korea. Reports about North Korean government officials’ visits and interviews with the Soviet government officials’ interviews were featured.

²⁵⁶ NARA RG 242, SA 2006, Box 15, Item 20, 조소친선 (Korea-Soviet Amity), The Korea-Soviet Cultural Association Central Committee, November, 1949.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 4.



Figure 15: *The Soviet Union was the Greatest State*²⁵⁸



Figure 16: Newspaper on the Soviet Union²⁵⁹

The North Korean government tried to introduce its citizens to the quality of life of people in the Soviet Union, hoping to increase North Koreans' motivation to learn from the Soviet Union to make their lives better and strengthen their motherland. Certainly the North Korean government did not present the real living conditions for Soviet citizens, which were quite strained in the aftermath of the Second World War. Instead, they must have present an idealized picture of Soviet life. Industrial Minister Jang Si Woo visited the Soviet Union and published *Visit to the Soviet Union* in February, 1950. As Industrial Minister, Jang focused on construction, industry and quality of life in the Soviet Union, including pictures of Soviet grocery stores. Jang also wrote about women's life and art of the Soviet Union. Jang was moved by the industrialized Soviet Union and its quality of life. As an official of a small and poor country, Jang saw the Soviet Union of 1950 as the ideal communist country.

²⁵⁸ NARA RG 242, SA 2008, Box 1, Item 104, *조선은 가장 위대한 국가이다*. (The Soviet Union was the greatest state).

²⁵⁹ NARA RG 242, File No. 200643. *소베트신보* (Newspaper on The Soviet Union), August 2, 1950.

In short, all Koreans shared the aspiration to make their homeland a highly economically developed nation. The only difference between the North and South in this regard was each government's ideal model, the Soviet Union or the USA.

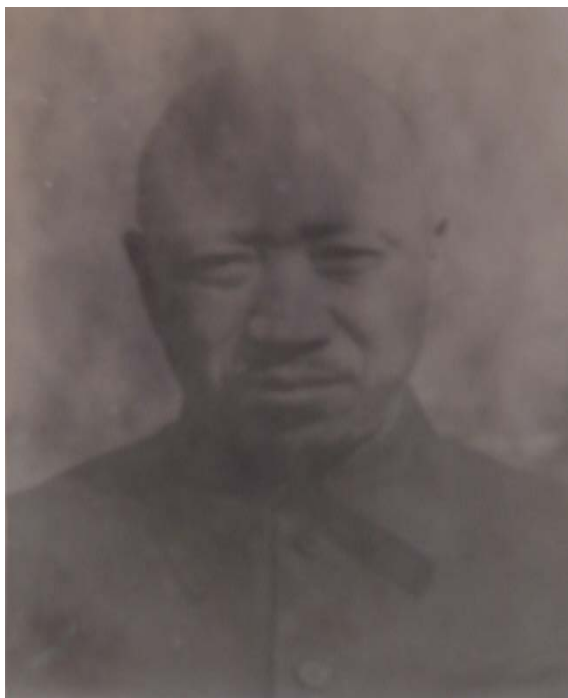


Figure 17: Industrial Minister Jang Si Woo²⁶⁰

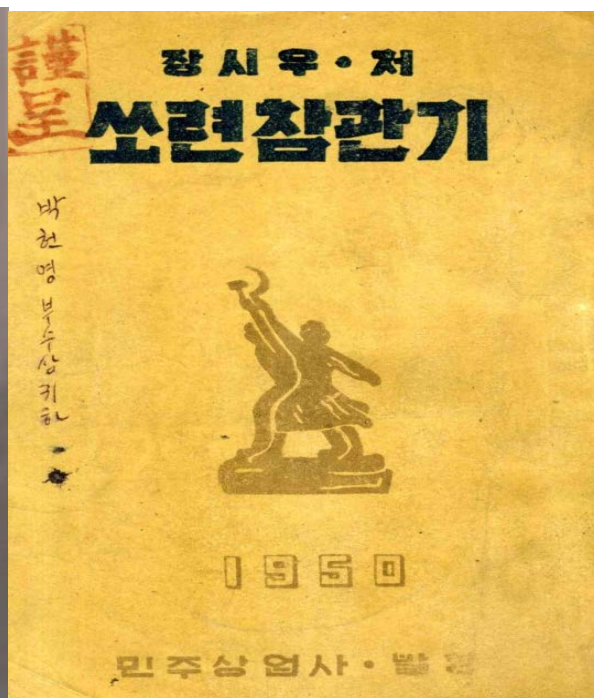


Figure 18: Visit to the Soviet Union, 1950²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ NARA RG 242, File No. 200847.

²⁶¹ NARA RG 242, Jang Si Woo, *소련참관기* (Visit to the Soviet Union), February 1, 1950, Industrial Ministry.

The New Elites: Upward Mobility Opportunities of Peasants and Workers

The New North Korean regime needed new elites, who had strong loyalty to the new regime. Former high-middle level bureaucrats and managers mostly were removed from their positions of government, industry, police and army. At least, 10% of total North Korean population, 1 million, went to South Korea from 1945 to 1950.²⁶² Poor young peasants and workers were good candidates for the new elites. The North Korean government defined pro-Japanese collaborationists as a hostile class and excluded them from high-middle level manager positions. The new government selectively hired new elites via high party officials' personal recommendations or an inspection of applicants' family background and put them into positions over industry, government, police, party and army. To poor young peasants and workers, this offered great upward mobility. From these secure jobs, they were able to feed their families. Women also benefitted from this new world. Although women's promotion and job opportunities were still limited because of patriarchal social culture of Korea, this period allowed women to work and participate in the industry and government workplace much than before. Their families became proud of their sons, daughters, husbands and fathers as new elites for the new country. This upward mobility, including jobs and study abroad opportunities, led to a support of the regime among people. Therefore, modernization in industry and army of North Korea was not led by a top-down initiative, but strongly supported by an interaction process between people's aspiration and political leadership.

Between 1945 and 1950, many young North Koreans went to the Soviet Union to learn industrial techniques and skills. Kim Il Sung frequently asked Stalin to send the Soviet

²⁶² 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 357-358.

technicians to North Korea and to receive North Korean youth to learn and study in the Soviet Union.²⁶³ Except for talks on invasion plans, especially in late 1949, most of conversations between Stalin and Kim Il Sung focused on economic development and trade, including exchange of the Soviet teachers and North Korean learners. Letters of young North Koreans in the Soviet Union and diaries of young North Korean soldiers showed their aspiration and passion to build a better and stronger homeland.

Ju Young Bok, a former KPA soldier, remembers a high passion among young soldiers between 1945 and 1950 to build strong national army.²⁶⁴ He remembers that although many conflicts existed between the Soviet advisors' arrogance and racism and North Korean young soldiers in the KPA, the Koreans' desire to learn modern skills from the Soviet Union easily overcame these conflicts at that time.

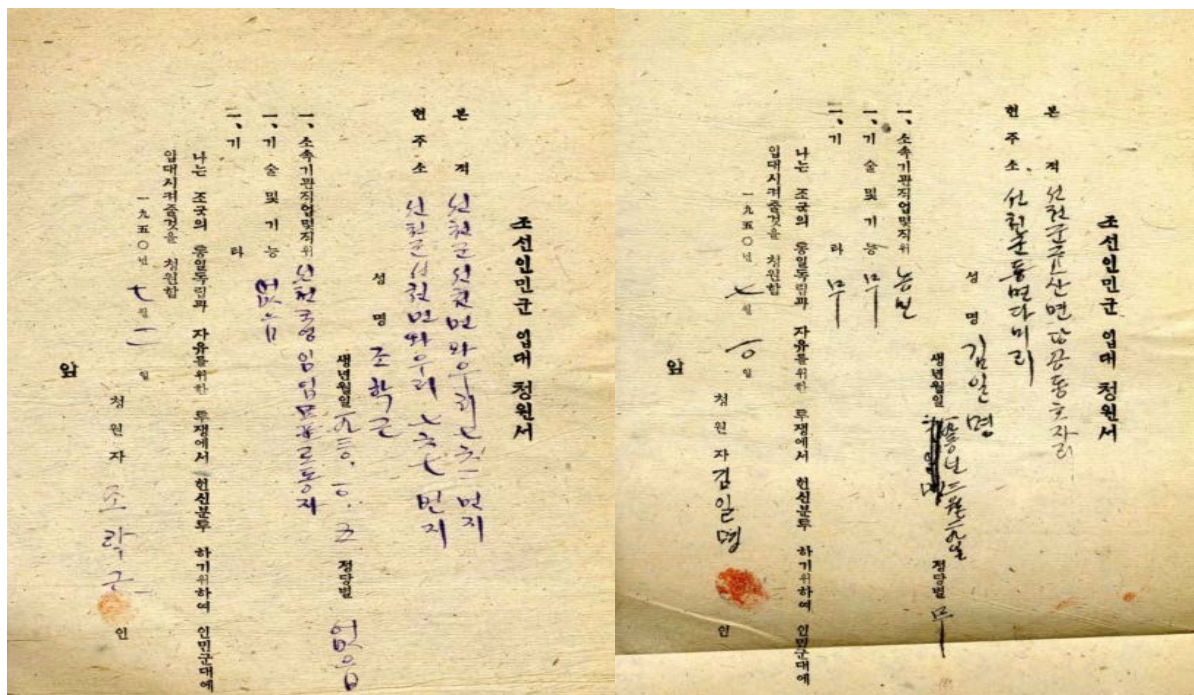
Application Forms, Resumes, Notes, and Pamphlets of the KPA soldiers

Application forms that prospective soldier of the KPA submitted yield information about the recruits.²⁶⁵ Most arose from poor peasant backgrounds. To sons and daughters of poor peasant family, these job opportunities was that dreams come true.

²⁶³ Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 5 (Spring 1995), 4-5. "Meeting between Stalin and Kim Il Sung." March 5, 1949.

²⁶⁴ 주영복, *내가 겪은 조선전쟁*, 105-106.

²⁶⁵ Until a beginning of conscription in early 1949, the KPA was a volunteer army. From 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2 기원과 원인*, 755.

Figure 19: Application Form for the KPA²⁶⁶Figure 20: Application Form for the KPA²⁶⁷

The application on the left was Jo Hak Gun's. In this form, he wrote that he had no qualification and skill, and his occupation was a worker for forestry. The application on the right was Kim Il Myoung's. He, too, wrote that he had no qualification and skill, and his occupation was a peasant. These two applicants for the KPA at that time. Former occupations of most applicants were largely peasants and low-wage workers. When they applied for the KPA, they did not have any knowledge about communism ideology and military techniques. They just wanted to get jobs to feed their family.

Many resumes of the KPA soldiers from RG 242 showed that most soldiers were former poor peasants. I found resumes of 45 soldiers of the 855th aviation unit and their resumes shows a typical family background of the KPA soldiers. All 45 soldiers were former poor peasants and most of them graduated from elementary school. A very few of them graduated from middle

²⁶⁶ NARA RG 242, Item 60, 1.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

school. For instance, Han Kyu Tae, who was born in 1926 and worked for the 855th aviation unit, entered to the KPA in March 8, 1950. His parents were poor peasants and he graduated from elementary school.²⁶⁸ He studied at Jamgaeri elementary school in Gaechun Gun in Pyongan Nam province from 1933 to 1939 and was farming with his parents for three years from 1939 to 1941. He was farming by himself from 1941 to 1945 and became the member of the NKWP in 1946.²⁶⁹ Lee Kwang Yong was born in 1932 and lived in Hamju gun in Hagyeong Nam Province. He was a former poor peasant and graduated from Jubok elementary school. He stopped his study at Yagang middle school after one year and entered the KPA on 15 March, 1950.²⁷⁰

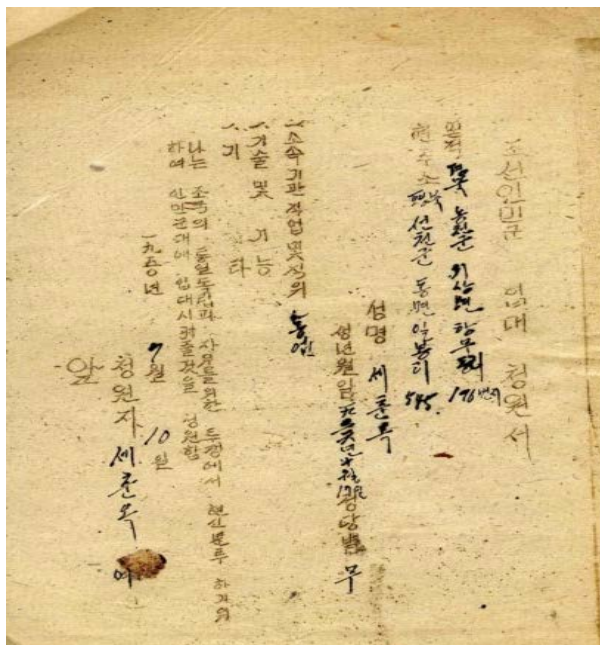


Figure 21: Application Form for the KPA²⁷¹

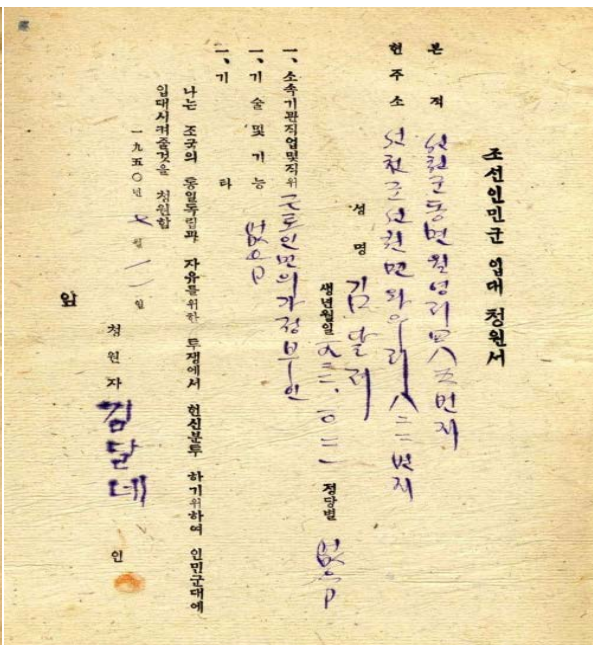


Figure 22: Application Form for the KPA²⁷²

²⁶⁸ NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 1/45.

²⁶⁹ NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 2/45.

²⁷⁰ NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 9/45, 10/45.

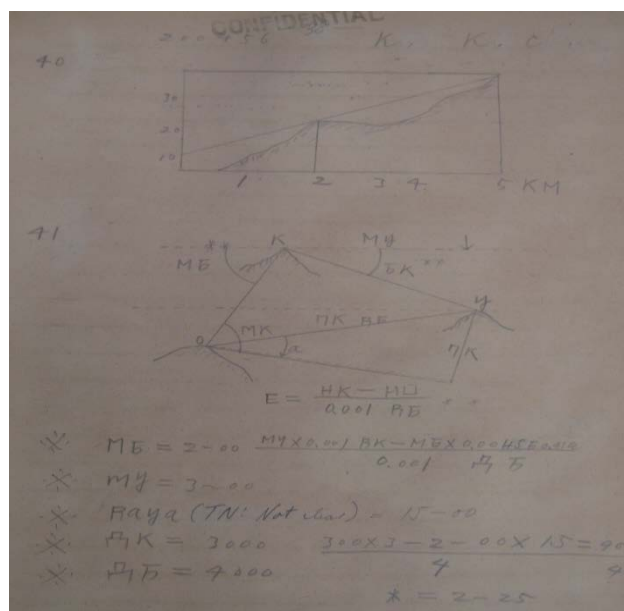
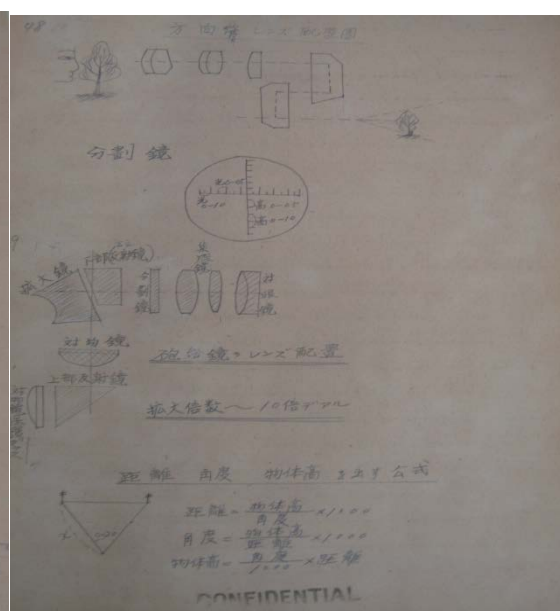
²⁷¹ NARA RG 242, Item 60, 3.

²⁷² *Ibid*, 21.

Women, too, applied to the KPA. The application on the right, above, Kim Dal Rae. She identified herself was a house worker, and wrote that she did not have any skills or qualification.

Because those young soldiers were poor and ideologically innocent, the Kim Il Sung regime easily educated them about their new identity and the directions the regime planned. The new uniform, modern weapons and equipment from the Soviet Union made these young men and women proud of their jobs. Compared to other young poor peasants and low-wage workers, the KPA soldiers had pride

For the KPA soldiers who had the opportunities to study abroad, the improvement in their status was remarkable. Just a few years early, studying abroad was impossible for these poor young men. Only rich men's sons studied in Japan during the colonial period. Now these sons of poor peasant family had study abroad opportunities in the Soviet Union. Their foreign study reflected well not only on them, but also on their parents. The KPA soldier Kim Sung Soo, for example, took careful notes during the military training and skills he received. He copied by hand the Soviet field manual on artillery mathematic, logic and physics. As a result, the level of military knowledge among KPA soldiers was not low level by Western standard.

Figure 23: The KPA Soldier Kim Sung Soo's Note²⁷³Figure 24: The KPA Soldier Kim Sung Soo's Note²⁷⁴

One pamphlet prepared for soldier by an unidentified KPA soldier was published by the army. It included Kim Il Sung's directions, a song for Kim Il Sung and the names of the North Korean cabinet members. Interestingly, it also included the general information about the Soviet Union, such as the demographic makeup of the Soviet population, the names of Soviet cabinet ministers, and profiles of East Europe. The North Korean government educated soldiers about the general profile of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in order to define soldiers' identities as revolutionary soldiers of international Communism.

²⁷³ NARA RG 242, File No. 200456. Kim Sung Soo, the KPA soldier's note.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 2.

소련의 개관	
수 도	모스크바
면 적	22,000,000 평방키로
인 구	200,000,000 (1946년 모든제)
민족수	60여종의 큰민족과 중족 100여종의 작은 민족과 중족
민족성분	(1939년 1월 17일 조사)
러시아인	58.41%
우크라이나인	16.56%
백로시아인	3.11%
파르스인	2.54%
아제르바이잔인	1.54%
그루지야인	1.33%
이브란인	1.27%
우즈베크인	2.86%
키자르인	1.83%

Figure 25: Demographic Information of the Soviet Union²⁷⁵ Figure 26: Cabinet Members of the Soviet Union²⁷⁶

[illegible]

Figure 27: Profiles of Eastern European Countries²⁷⁷ Figure 28: Profiles of Eastern European Countries²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ NARA RG 242, File No. 200779, 27.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 28.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 33.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 34.

Letters of Students from the Soviet Union

Young North Korean learners in the Soviet Union sent many letters to their families in their home county. In these letters, young men expressed longing for their family, but most of all, they showed a great pride in their future career and hopes for their new home country, North Korea. We should not assume that these students' expressions of patriotism were insincere, the product of coercion. On the contrary, many letters showed that the Korean students did not worry about government inspection their letters. Amidst expressions of pride in their motherland and hope for their own careers, they also worried about the complicated political situation in Korea. They readily blamed US imperialism and Syngman Rhee's in South Korea for problems. Kim Young Rhul, who studied a railway university in the Soviet Union, wrote to his parents blaming Syngman Rhee's regime and the US imperialism regarding the Korean War. His appreciation went to the Soviet Union's help and support regarding the war.²⁷⁹ Um Myong Sub wrote to his family from a university of Moscow, expressing his great hope and passion for his future in his letter.²⁸⁰ In the same vein, Han Dong Hum, a student at Lumber Mill of the Soviet Union told his family that he would return to Korea soon, after three or four years, having acquired advanced skills.²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ NARA RG 242, File No. 200775. Kim Young Rhul's letter. 1950. June. 18.

²⁸⁰ NARA RG 242, File No. 200775. Um Myoung Sub's letter. 1950. July. 26.

²⁸¹ NARA RG 242, File No. 200775. Han Dong Hum's Letter to His Family. 1950. July 2.

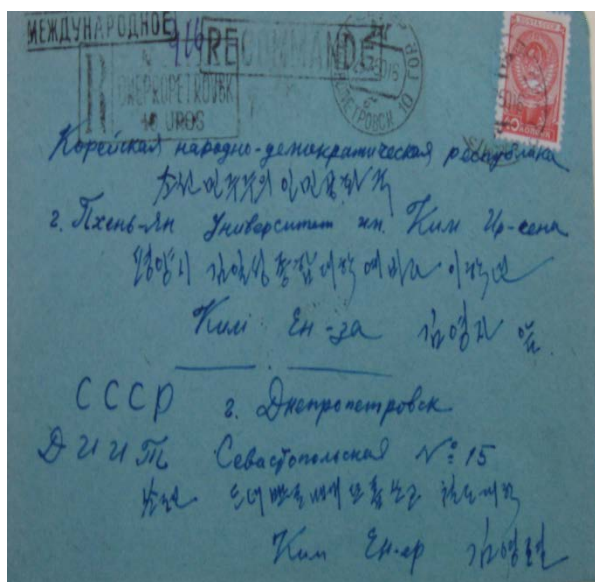


Figure 29: Kim Myoung Rhul's Letter²⁸²

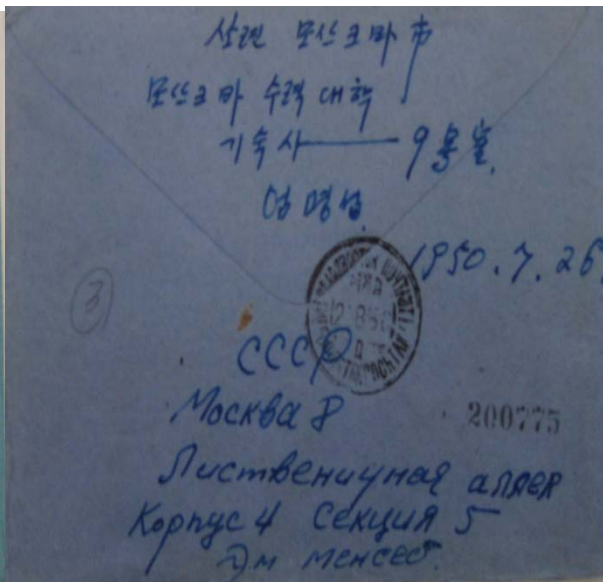
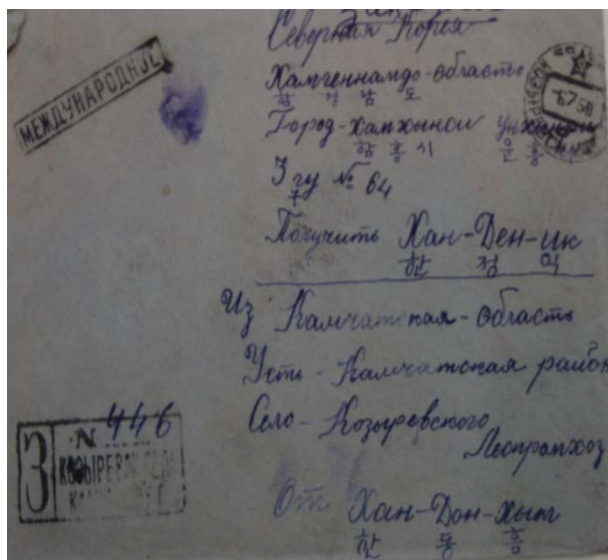
Figure 30: Um Myoung Sub's Letter²⁸³Figure 31: Han Dong Hum's Letter²⁸⁴

Figure 32: Han Dong Hum's Picture Inside His Letter²⁸⁵

²⁸² NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Kim Young Rhul's Letter.

²⁸³*Ibid*, Um Myoung Sub's Letter.

²⁸⁴ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Han Dong Hum's Letter to His Family. 1950. July 2.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid*, Han Dong Hum's Picture inside his Letter.

North Korean students' education in the Soviet Union was not limited to industrial skills and techniques, but also varieties cultural education, including dance. Back Tae Gong was a student of Choi Seung Hee, a very famous and prominent dance in North, a founder of modern Korean dance, and legendary not only in North Korea but also in the South. Back wrote from the Soviet Union to his teacher Choi, expressing his patriotism for his motherland.



Figure 33: Letter of Dancing Student Back Tae Gong²⁸⁶ Figure 34: Back Tae Gong's Picture Inside His Letter²⁸⁷

Once the Korean War began, the students away in the Soviet Union expressed their hopes for a victory. Kim Ha Jong, for example, stated such feelings, and his passion to contribute to the development of his motherland with the skills he learned in the Soviet Union. When he wrote the letter on July 27, 1950, the KPA had advanced deep into the South. But his letter included quotidian information also; he wrote that he was going to have a vacation in Moscow in the late August for a week.²⁸⁸ Park Tae Bong sent letter to his lover, An Seoung Hee, on August 3, 1950. He informed her that he was going to come back to the motherland in August, 1951.

²⁸⁶ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Back Tae Gong's Letter to Choi Seung Hee. 1950. August. 3.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, Back Tae Gong's Picture inside his letter.

²⁸⁸ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Kim Ha Jong's Letter, July 27, 1950

Interestingly, he wrote that he had never see An Seoung Hee but he had only received the picture of her An Seoung Hee. He told his unknown fiancée about his optimistic view of the war and his aspiration for his career future.²⁸⁹



Figure 35: North Korean Young Men and Women in the Soviet Union²⁹⁰ Figure 36: Paek Tae Bong's Picture²⁹¹

North Korean women also studied in the Soviet Union. During the Japanese period, daughters of rich men were able to study in Japan and they were called “New Women” or “Modern Women” in the 1920’s. These New Women had a reputation for free love and became representative of modernization in Korea. In the late 1940’s, daughters of middle class and poor peasant class had study abroad opportunities for the first time, now in the Soviet Union. In their letters, they included their pictures in the Soviet Union. They expressed same patriotic ideas as the male students. They anticipated the same career as military, scientific, and cultural leaders. They expected that they would not become empty embodiments of modernity. The North Korean government led women’s liberation movement and provided study abroad opportunities to

²⁸⁹ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Park Tae Bong’s Letter, August 3, 1950

²⁹⁰ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775.

²⁹¹ *Ibid*, Paek Tae Bong’s Picture.

women. Although North Korean society was still male-dominant society especially in the workplace, the government wanted to use images of motherhood as ideal citizens, such as working harder, sacrificing more and uniting as one people, and mobilized its people including women to work harder in the workplaces.²⁹²



Figure 37: North Korean Female Student in the Soviet Union²⁹³ Figure 38: North Korean Female Student²⁹⁴

Unfortunately, family never received these letters US forces intercepted them during the American occupation of North Korea. As evidence of the importance the North Korean government gave to foreign education, these North Korean students were not required to return home for war mobilization, but instead they were permitted to continue their studies. Most remained in the Soviet Union throughout the war.

After their studies, these North Korean young men and women became middle-high level managers and supervisors of the party, the army, the higher education institutions, schools,

²⁹² Suzy Kim, Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 202.

²⁹³ NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*, Picture of North Korean Female Student in the Soviet Union.

industry, media and government. The new government needed these new elites. And these new elites needed the new society. The KPA was a part of these great opportunities for the new elites. These sons and daughters of poor peasant family were the best candidates as new elites of a new North Korean government because they had new identities and strong loyalty for the regime.

Their parents' generation had learned similar high techniques and skills from Japanese technicians and managers in factories and companies during the colonial period. However, Korea under Japanese rule did not afford that generation the same opportunities that the post war generation anticipated. These young men and women in the Soviet Union had a great hope and wanted to contribute their skills and passion for economic development and military strengthening of their homeland. In the South, young South Korean men who studied in the US (most of them were junior military officers, including a future President Park Jung Hee), voiced the same passion and optimism for their future.

6. The Origins of the Soviet Army and Development of Soviets' Strategy for a War

In this chapter, I compare the origins of the Red Army and the formation of the KPA. From this comparative study, I make two arguments. Firstly, I argue that the KPA's process of transformation copy led and paste from the Soviet model for its development led to many problems in the coming war because the KPA had a different historical background from the Red Army. Institutions, doctrines and strategic cultures originate from particular historical and cultural backgrounds. Externally, the KPA resembled the Soviet style army because it had Soviet organizations, weapons, equipment, and doctrine, and was trained by Soviet advisors with Soviet leadership philosophy. However, the KPA of the 1940s was neither the Red Army of the 1920s after the Russian Civil War nor the Soviet Army of the late 1940s after the Second World War. The KPA had different history and culture and fought in weather and terrain very different from the Soviet Army. Unfit Soviet style organization and strategic culture was not suited to Korea, and that led to practical problems for the KPA in the coming war. While the Sovietization of the KPA was almost completed at the eve of the war, the Koreanization (localization) of the KPA had not even begun. The KPA paid a high price for this.

Secondly, I demonstrate that North Korean elites took the initiative in building the KPA. After the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from North Korea, the Kremlin wanted North Korea to have a strong army to defend against future possible threats from South Korea, Japan and the US. However, the Soviet Union did not lead the process to build the KPA, but played a secondary role to that of North Koreans. The Soviet Union did not send weapons and equipment to North Korea for free. And the Soviet Union did not send anything without Kim Il Sung's request. This

does not mean that the Soviet Union's role was small, but it means that North Korean elites built the KPA on their own initiative.

The North Korean elites' initiative for the KPA development led to Chinese influence over the KPA. Because the elites of the KPA were largely guerilla forces who closely worked with PLA for more than a decade, the Maoist way of war naturally was naturally influenced them more than Soviet material culture did. Kim Il Sung wanted to build the KPA into a force that resembled the Soviet Army, arguably, the strongest in the world at that time. However, veterans of the Chinese Civil War who returned to the KPA between 1949 and 1950 brought with them the Chinese culture of war, and it influenced the character of the KPA more deeply – a point, which many historians have not recognized.

The Origins of the Soviet Army

The model of the KPA was the Soviet Army. After the Second World War, the Red Army was arguably the most powerful ground force on the planet. After four years of struggle against the Nazi German Army, the Soviet Army claimed victory. The Soviet Army received massive logistic and supply support from Land-Lease program of the US. Nonetheless, it was the Soviet Army that conducted successful large-scale operation on the Eastern Front, and advanced rapidly towards Berlin. The Soviets, Operation August Storm was its successful operation during the Second World War - a master piece of the Soviet *Deep Operation*. Kim Il Sung participated in and observed the defeat of the Japanese Army by the Soviet Army. Naturally, he chose the Soviet Army as the role model for the KPA, and sought support and guidance of the Soviet Union.

However, the KPA was not the Soviet Army in many aspects because of its different situation and history. The Red Army arose first after the October Revolution of 1917. Leon Trotsky was the founder of the Red Army, the first People's Commissar of Military Affairs and the first chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council (former Supreme Military Council). Trotsky built the New Soviet Army both to win victory against the White Army in the Russian Civil War, and for the ultimate goal of world revolution. "We could not build a centralized military apparatus, without drawing into the work many representatives of the old officer corps," Trotsky wrote.²⁹⁵ He emphasized, "We need a real armed force, constructed on the basis of military science. Active and systematic participation in all our work by military specialists is therefore a matter of vital necessity."²⁹⁶ Many of Trotsky's opponents objected to the return of former Tsarist army officers, including even generals. Nevertheless, Trotsky believed that their technical knowledge and experiences as Tsarist army officers contributed to building a regular army. He pointed out that "The art of war, that's a complex subject... We now need to prepare ourselves in military matters, and for that we need to learn: but, in order to learn, we must have specialists."²⁹⁷

Trotsky argued that the former Tsarist military officers presented a low risk of organized counter-revolutionary activities. "Many of them betrayed us, going over to the enemy or taking part in revolts: but, in the main, their spirit of class resistance was broken," Trotsky averred.²⁹⁸ The enemy, the White Army, was composed of former colleagues and superiors Tsarist officers recruited into the Red Army. Although aware of the risk, Trotsky downplayed them: "If we take

²⁹⁵ Leon Trotsky, *How the Revolution armed: the military writings and speeches of Leon Trotsky* Volume 1 (London: New Park Publications, 1979-1981), 10.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 172.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 75.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 10.

Tsarist generals into our service, suppose they start to engage in counter-revolutionary activity? I don't know, some of them may wish to. It is quite possible that some may even try it; but, as the saying goes: 'If you're afraid of wolves, don't go into the forest.'²⁹⁹ He believed that political commissars could control military specialists and counter-revolutionary activities: "The commissar is a political worker, a revolutionary... If the commissar has observed that there is danger to the revolution from the military leader, the commissar has the right to deal ruthlessly with the counter-revolutionary, even to the point of shooting him."³⁰⁰

Trotsky's thesis was proven correct in the Russian setting. The former Tsarist military specialists he recruited did not organize counter-revolutionary activities, and they proceeded to build the Red Army into a successful force, which defeated the White enemies.

In South Korea, the leaders unwittingly acted in accordance with Trotsky's philosophy. They reintroduced former pro-Japanese collaborationists Korean soldiers into the South Korean Army. Nearly all of the 110 graduates of the first military officer institution of South Korea, the Military English School – later Korea Military Academy, from December, 1945 to April, 1946, were former Japanese soldiers who had previously studied at Japanese military institutions. Former soldiers of the anti-Japanese Korea Liberation Army did not attend the school because they did not want to work with former Japanese collaborationists. Among those 110 graduates, 78 men became generals; 8 became four star generals and 12 became the Chief of the Army Staff. Because of these officers' background, Japanese military culture persisted in the ROK Army even though its organization, doctrine, equipment, supply and field manuals came from the

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 75.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 167.

US. Because the former Japanese collaborationists wanted to overcome their embarrassing past, they fought passionately against the KPA.

The KPA, in contrast, had few number of former Japanese collaborationists among its staff, even technicians and engineers. Instead, the KPA drew upon former soldiers of the KVA, former soldiers of the Soviet 88th Special Brigade and the Soviet-Koreans, who lived on the territory of the Soviet Union and joined the Red Army during the Second World War. The KPA did not need former Japanese collaborationist soldiers.

The KPA followed the commissar system of the Soviet Army, but in the absence of similar historical circumstances. Political commissars introduced into the Red Army because Bolshevik revolutionaries such as Trotsky feared possible military coups by former Tsarist officers. This situation led to the system of political commissars. However, the soldiers of the KPA did not have the same sort of suspicion political past. Instead, they were former guerilla forces who worked with CCP and PLA, or inexperienced young people. Nonetheless, Kim Il Sung introduced commissar system because he wanted to control the KPA through his own men and the North Korean Workers' Party. Kim Il Sung appointed as the first director of the cultural training bureau (later political training bureau) Kim Il (1945-1950), a close colleague from the Soviet 88th Special Brigade. But the commissar system was not politically necessary, and it led to inefficiency in the command and control of the KPA soldiers when the commanders and the commissars conflicted.

Alexander Svechin, the military commander of the Smolensk region in 1918 and rose to the head of the All-Russian General Staff, and later a professor of the Academy of General Staff of the Red Army, became one of the most important experts on Soviet military strategy. It was

Svechin who first created the term of operational art between strategy and tactics. Svechin's critical thinking, incorporating the relationship between politics and strategy and a strategy of destruction or attrition, greatly influenced Soviet military strategy and the Soviet army officers during the Second World War. The war between Germany and the Soviet Union during the Second World War became the war which Svechin expected and the Soviet Union won the war based in part on Svechin's ideas, theories, and methods.

Svechin recognized that the superiority of politics over strategy is universal in nature. He used the example of Bismarck to support his argument: "Bismarck would not have been able to guide Prussian politics so authoritatively if he had not had such a profound understanding of the situation in the theater of war."³⁰¹ At the same time, he argued that responsible politicians should be familiar with military strategy. In contrast, most Western strategists and Svechin's own Russian colleague Mikhail Tukhachevsky advocated independence of military strategy from politics. Nevertheless, Svechin demonstrated that the goals and methods of resolving political problems could not help but affect the nature and forms of conducting war. He argues a political decision must be weighed with strategy, especially in wartime. Svechin defines that: "tactics is an extension of operational art and operational art is an extension of strategy, strategy is an extension of politics."³⁰²

Svechin applied his theory about the interrelationship of military strategy and politics to the situation of opinion was relevant to his argument about a protracted war. He argued that a strategy of attrition was an alternative to annihilation and this was better suited to Russia's situation in the 1920's and, in particular, at the initial stage of a war. Mikhail Tukhachevsky

³⁰¹ Alexander Svechin, *Strategy*, 74.

³⁰² *Ibid*, 70.

believed a speedy and easy victory could be achieved by one decisive battle, using a strategy of destruction. Svechin's thinking and assumptions were different. Through his first-hand experience from the extended battlefield in Manchuria (front 155km, depth 80km), he demonstrated that the nature of war in the future would be large-scale successive operations in an extended battlefield. Such war could not be explained by traditional concepts of strategy or tactics. He also argued a revolutionary or proletarian war of destruction had still not occurred. Because a future war would be a long war, he emphasized that military commanders should be familiar with economic considerations. He criticized proponents of the strategy of destruction for having a narrow perception of military logistics. Instead, Svechin pointed out that the center of gravity in war should lay on the economic and political fronts, not on the military front. He believed the Soviet Union need to use its geographical advantages in a protracted war, using a strategy of attrition. In order to use those geographical advantages, an operation art of attrition at the initial stage of war should be planned.

Svechin's assumptions and arguments were proven right in the Second World War. The Red Army should have made an operational plan of attrition for the initial stage of war. This war was not ended by one decisive, quick victory. It proved lengthy and involved several large-scale theaters and operations. Military commanders had to become familiar with economic considerations, and politicians had to be familiar with a military strategy. Logistics was very important to support successive operations in the front. After numerous casualties during the beginning of Operation Barbarossa, the Red Army finally transformed itself into Svechin's type of fighting force at the winter of 1942/1943.

The KPA did not have the historical experience of a long military history like the German and Russian armed forces. Therefore, the KPA could not maximize its fighting capabilities by

copying the Soviet model. The KPA translated many field manuals, doctrines and combat history from the German-Soviet War. It received Soviet tanks, rifles, ammunition, trucks, and materiel, and it was partially trained in the Soviet techniques. Consequently, when the KPA planned its invasion of the South, it mimicked many aspects of the Soviet experience in the Second World War.

Because Kim Il Sung planned a quick victory, the KPA suffered from a lack of logistical planning. The KPA was not ready for the conventional warfare more than one month. The KPA did not have an equivalent of the Soviet GOSPLAN to manage resources for total war. The military committee was organized on June 26, 1950, one day after the invasion, for a rapid mobilization of the strength of all people. The chairman of the military committee was Kim Il sung and the members were Pak Hon-yong, Hong Myung Hee, Kim Ch'aek, Ch'oi Yong-gon, Park Il Woo, and Chung Joon T'aek. The mission of this military committee was to mobilize all resources for a victory of war and all government bodies came to belong to this committee.³⁰³ Nonetheless, this committee was not the Soviet's GOSPLAN system, which was remaining in existence in a peacetime for governing the economy and its central economic planning, but a temporary committee who was created one day after the war.³⁰⁴ Kim Il Sung and the KPA did

³⁰³ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 122.

³⁰⁴ Research on Soviet's management of all sources for a total war are as follows: Mark Harrison, eds. *Guns and Rubuls: the defense industry in the Stalinist state* (New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2008); *Soviet planning in peace and war, 1938-1945* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Mark Harrison and John Barber, *The Soviet Defence-Industry Complex from Stalin to Khrushchev* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000); David R. Stone, *Hammer and Rifle: Militarization of the Soviet Union, 1926-1933* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000); Lennart Samuelson, *Plans for Stalin's War Machine: Tukhachevskii and Military-Economic Planning, 1925-1941* (New York, NY: St. Martin Press, 2000); Sally W. Stoecker, *Forging Stalin's Army: Marshal Tukhashevsky and the Politics of Military Innovation* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988); Jacob W. Kipp, *Mass, Mobility, and the Red Army's Road to Operational Art, 1918-1936* (Fort Leavenworth, KS : Foreign Military

not learn from the initial mistakes the Soviet made in the war against Nazi Germany. Instead, they hurried attack the South without sufficient logistics and resources. Because of Kim Il Sung's inexperience, the KPA suffered from large-scale casualties that otherwise it could have been avoid.

Without seriously studying the Second World War on the Eastern Front, Kim Il Sung focused only on the rapid development of the KPA. KPA soldiers wore Soviet style uniforms, handled Soviet rifles, drove Soviet tanks and trucks, and became a part of Soviet style command and control system. He shaped the KPA to look like the Soviet Army, but he and his colleagues still thought like students of Mao's people's war, focusing on popular uprising, insurgency, and guerilla tactics. The result was a disconnection in the KPA between the Soviet style structures and equipment and the ideas about how to conduct war, which had serious consequences when hostilities erupted.

The Formation of the KPA, 1945-1950

Just after the liberation August, 1945, three volunteer security organizations were established in North Korea. They were Jawidae (self-defense forces) organized by nationalists, People's Guards organized by the domestic communists, and the Red guards. Those volunteer

Studies Office, 1988); G. Sorokin, "Gosplan During the Years of the Great Patriotic War" *Problems in Economics*, Volume 14, Issue 3 (1971): 62-78.

armed organizations clashed with one another and contended for the initiative to shape political events in North Korea.

As discussed above, initially, the Soviet authorities tried to build a good relationship with both Communist and nationalist Korean leaders. However, ultimately the Kremlin decided to support Kim Il Sung's group, because they were familiar with him from his service in Khabarovsk. At that time, Kim Il Sung and his group often met Genral Meretskov, M.A., General Shtykov, General Ivan M. Chistiakov and General Nikolai G. Lebedev.³⁰⁵

One of the prominent and well-known domestic communists Hyun Jun Hyuck, who argued that the North Korean state should be established by all experienced senior leaders from all political parties. He thought that it was premature to establish a communist state because Korea had not experienced a workers' revolution. Hyun was assassinated by the Red Guard members under another domestic communist Park Si Woo, who was embraced by the Soviet authority and Kim Il Sung's group. Because the Soviet authorities wanted to give the integrated police and security power to Kim Il Sung's group and alleviate the chaotic situation of three different security volunteer organizations, the Soviet military government began to impose restrictions on all three organizations. Colonel-General Ivan Chistakov ordered that all armed organizations be dissolved and their weapons, ammunition and other military supplies be turned over the Soviet occupation authorities by 12 October, 1945. On 14 October, Kim Il Sung was introduced by Major-General Lebedev as the hero who had led the anti-Japanese struggle of the Korean people at a large-scale people's rally held in Pyongyang. They designated Kim Il Sung as the chief organizer of the North Korean Branch Bureau of the Korean Communist Party on 19

³⁰⁵ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *6.25 전쟁사 1*, 226. ; 김광운, “전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설,” 7.

October. On October 21, the Soviet military government created a new Security Corps under Soviet control. The Soviets selected 2,000 men whom they judged to be faithful followers of the Soviet Military Government with the Communist ideology.

From this time, Kim Il Sung started his official career as the chief agent of Soviet authority. The Soviet authority ordered the people's committee to organize police forces as department of security and gave authority over the security forces into Kim Il Sung. In late November, the Soviet authority blocked 600 KVA soldiers who had returned from China entering North Korea. Kim Il Sung shared the Soviets' anxiety concerning the possible influence of the returned pro-Chinese Korean Communists. Consequently, he ordered security forces headed by Ham Woong to attack the unarmed KVA forces, who were staying one middle school in Shinuiju.³⁰⁶ Because of Soviet support, Kim Il Sung's two top partners held two positions. Ch'oi Yong-gon became the director of security forces and Kim Ch'ack became the director of Pyongyang Academy. At the same time, Kim Il Sung thwarted the ambitions of persons from the Yeonan faction and the KVA, blocking their participation in the top positions of emerging government and army at the early stage of post-liberated North Korea. One of them, Mu Jong, felt outraged when he was not nominated as the top position of the KPA. Former KPA officer general Yu Song Chul remembers that no Korean veteran officers who fought during the Chinese Civil War were allowed to enter the secret situation room and to read the invasion plans. The Chinese liaison officer was similarly excluded. Only Soviet-born KPA officers and selected top

³⁰⁶ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *6.25 전쟁사 1*, 225-228. ; Korea Institute of Military History (KIMH), *The Korean War I* (Seoul: Korea Institute of Military History, 1997), 35-36. ; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 32-38.

KPA commanders were allowed in.³⁰⁷ Even though Kim Il Sung had earlier discussed possible invasion plans with Mao and received his promise to help if the US intervened, he did not keep him abreast of development. But Mao heard about the beginning of the Korean War not by his liaison officer in Pyongyang but by reading morning newspaper. In this way, Kim Il Sung and the Soviets precluded possible powerful Chinese influence. During the war, this pattern continued.

On November 19, 1945, Kim Il Sung established a Security Bureau having central authority over all police forces in North Korea, and named Ch'oe Yong-gon, one of his top men, as its director. The internal security system of North Korea followed the Soviet model and Ch'oe Yong-gon played a similar role of the head of the Soviet NKVD. The Security Bureau was in charge of border and railway security troops, fire brigades, the prison, and others. Many members of Kim Il Sung's group and Soviet-Koreans held the positions of provincial and county heads of the police forces. By early 1946, several provisional security forces were established including Chinampo and training centers for Security Corps in Kaechon, Sinuiju, Chongju, and Kanggye.³⁰⁸

Kim Il Sung established the Railway Security Guards with central headquarters in Pyongyang on 12 January, 1946. These security forces guarded railroad tracks, tunnels, and stations in North Korea, using captured Japanese model 99 rifles. Thirteen companies were organized in Kanggye, Yangdeok, Wonsan, Hamheung, Shinpo, Seochon, Seongjin, Sangsambong, Sariwon and Sinsengchon.³⁰⁹ Training centers for Railway Security Guards were

³⁰⁷ 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1 결정과 발발*, 354.; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 158-159.

³⁰⁸ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 35-36.; Kim, *The North Korean People's Arm*, 42-43.

³⁰⁹ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *6.25 전쟁사 1*, 232.

established in Kaeshon and Nanam. The key posts of the Railway Security Guards went to the Soviet-Koreans, such as Han kyong-soo, Park Woo-seob, Park Young-soon, Kim Mun-seob, Chon mun-wook, Kim Chang-bong, Choi Chang-dok and An Young, and Chinese-Koreans, such as Ju youn, Yu Yong-kyu, Cho so-hyang, Baek Nak-chil and Kim Man-young.³¹⁰ They later were integrated into the regular army, the Security Officers Training Command. Jang points out that the Soviet created the Soviet created the Railway Security Guards for two main reasons. One is that the Soviets wanted to get North Korean industrial equipment back to the Soviet Union, and so wanted to the railroads to operate more efficiently and securely. More importantly, the Soviets wanted to create the regular army from these disguised forces.

Scholars disagree on the relationship between the Security Corps and the KPA. Korea Institute of Military History lists it as a core element of the KPA, while Jang argues that the Railway Security Guards formed the basis for the KPA, rather than the Security Corps.³¹¹ Kim Kuk Hun argues that those security forces were not the beginning of the KPA because there is a clear distinction between the security force under the Ministry of the Interior and the defense force under the Ministry of Defense in terms of mission, organization, equipment and training in communist countries.³¹² Nonetheless, because these officers and enlisted men of both the Security Corps and the Railway Security Guards became core members of the KPA core elements, it is legitimate to see them as a part of the KPA building process.

Despite the small numbers of representatives in the party and government, Kim Il Sung's group won the political struggle and dominated all key posts of those security and police forces.

³¹⁰ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 36. ; 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 46-47. ; 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 6.25 전쟁사 1, 231.

³¹¹ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 35. ; 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 45.

³¹² Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 50.

Kim Kwangun demonstrates that Kim Il Sung's group members believed that only military forces had the capacity to make people's revolution, because they were former guerilla forces with harsh experiences. This was a fundamentally different view from other communist intellectuals who believed that the revolution should originate from the bottom up, created by peasants and workers. Kim argues that was why Kim Il Sung's group continued to dominate key posts of military and security forces while they held relatively smaller posts in the party and the government.³¹³

One of the most important milestones for the KPA was the establishment of the Pyongyang Academy. Kim Il Sung established the Pyongyang Academy on 8 February 1946. This Academy produced military and political cadres for the army. This was the first military and political institute in North Korea, and its purpose was to train military and political cadres. The graduates of this Academy became the backbone of the modern regular armed forces. The Pyongyang Academy became the parent of military schools for various services. Kim Il Sung had laid the ground work for this Academy since November 17, 1945. Kim made an emotional speech at that time:

In former days when their country was lost to the Japanese imperialists because they had no powerful national army of their own, the Korean people were subjected to colonial oppression and cruel exploitation. A glimpse at the houses here in Chiul-ri is a clear enough indication of the harsh humiliation the Koreans underwent under the colonial rule of Japanese imperialism. The Japanese discriminated against Koreans at every step even in dining rooms and lodging quarters and exploited Korean youth like beasts of burden. A person without a homeland is always destined to lead a life more miserable than a dog in a house of death. This is quite true. Under Japanese imperialist rule, our people were forced to live with pent-up grievances. Not only in Chiul-ri but everywhere else in our country you can find traces of the sorrowful, piteous life the Koreans had led under the tyranny of Japanese imperialism. Why, then, shouldn't we be consumed with animosity against the Japanese? Our people can never allow

³¹³ 김광운, “전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설”, 14.

such humiliating slavery to be imposed them again. We must not fail to build by our own efforts an independent and sovereign democratic state and found our powerful regular national army.³¹⁴

Interestingly, Kim Il Sung did not mention his appreciation for Soviet help or support regarding constructing the KPA units and institutions, even though in general he expressed appreciation to the Soviet Union for its support for in industry, economy and general education. Instead, he emphasized the humiliation of Korean people experienced under the Japanese imperialism, and their aspiration to sovereignty and independence. Thus, his speech focused on nationalistic themes, such as national pride and independence, and not communist concerns, such as capitalist exploitation and international revolution.

The Pyongyang Academy was not just a military and political school to Kim Il Sung. This was the first regular institution to train Korean military officers to defend the homeland against external threats. Kim Il Sung showed an ongoing interest in the Academy, visiting construction site on 26 December, 1945.³¹⁵

Kim Il Sung's group members controlled the admission process for the Pyongyang Academy. They travelled around the provinces and recruited core members of the People's Committees for its first class students of students. Through this Academy, Kim Il Sung's group members wanted to expand their political base. Naturally, the students of this Academy had strong loyalty to their recommenders. The first director of the Pyongyang Academy was Kim Ch'ack, from the elites of Kim Il Sung's group; the vice director was Ki Seok-bok, the Soviet Korean and former Soviet Union's middle school teacher. The chief of staff was Kim Dong-soo,

³¹⁴ Foreign Languages Publishing House, Kim Il Sung works 1 (Pyongyang, Korea, 1980), 363.

³¹⁵ Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 50.

also a Soviet Korean. Kim Il Sung remained deeply involved in building the Pyongyang Academy with his man, An Kil, the 2nd director of this Academy. Thirty men from Kim Il Sung's group constituted the faculty of this Academy. Starting with a four month course, the first class graduated in July 1946.³¹⁶

Interestingly, this Academy became incubator for Kim Il Sung's own children and his right hand men. Kim Il Sung strongly encouraged his close colleagues' sons, cousins and nephews to apply for this academy. Kim Kwang Un points out that this Academy was based on familism of the Kim Il Sung group. The graduates of this academy became important human sources for the party, government and military. For instance, Kim Il Sung's nephew, Kim Won-joo, his wife, Kim Il Sung's relatives Kang Yong-seok and Kim Byung-rhul graduated with the first class.³¹⁷

In addition to Kim Il Sung's own family and those of his immediate circle, the Academy became a locus for upward mobility for uneducated and poor youth of North Korea. The first graduating class consisted of 300 men, whom the academy assigned to branch schools, such as infantry, armor and engineer. From June 26, 1946, the Academy offered a regular 15-month course of study. The first regular class consisted of 800 students, and they graduated on October 5, 1947. The objective of this Academy was a political-ideology education rather than technical-military skill. The Academy assigned these first regular class graduates to the political-cultural bureau of military units or to work as interpreters for the Soviet advisors. The second class students of the regular course graduated in early 1948.

³¹⁶ 국방부 군사편찬연구소, *6.25 전쟁사 1*, 234-235. Kim, *The North Korean People's Army*, 51. ; KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 37.

³¹⁷ 김광운, “전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설”, 18.

In January, 1949, the Pyongyang Academy moved to Pyongyang Mangyondae and was renamed to the Second Officer School of the People's Army. The curriculum of this School remained political-cultural education, in particular Marxist-Leninist political ideology and the history of Kim Il Sung's guerilla movement. The Second Director of Academy was An Gil and the Third Director was Ki Seok-bok. This school produced a total 2,500 men before the Korean War, and the graduates became middle-level political-cultural commissars of the military, government and party.³¹⁸

In June, 1946, Kim Il Sung established the Central Security Officers' School to train officers in technical-military skills. The founders of this School included 30 from Kim Il Sung's group and 10 men who graduated from the Pyongyang Academy. This School had four bureaus: tactics, artillery, shooting and signal. The first director of the school was Park Hyo Sam, who was the former chief of staff of the KVA and a Yeonan group member.³¹⁹ The first class of 300 men entered the school on October 22, 1946. They were nominated through a selection process of the Central Committee of the North Korea Workers' Party. The three hundred men were divided into three companies. The first and second were infantry and artillery company, which had each 120 men. The third company was a signal company, which had 60 men. The company and platoon commanders were Soviet-Koreans who were enrolled in the Soviet Army. The instructors were also Soviet-Koreans and former Soviet Army soldiers. The course period was one year and the first class graduated on October 26, 1947. This School was renamed as the

³¹⁸ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 37-38.; 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 48-50.

³¹⁹ *Ibid*, 50-51. Kim Kwang Un points out that Park Hyo Sam was not the first director but the first director was un-known. 김광운, “전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설,” 20.

Second Officer School of the People's Army in early December, 1948. Most military officers of the KPA during the War were graduates of this School.³²⁰

On August 15, 1946, the first anniversary of Liberation day, Kim Il Sung established the Security Officers Training Command in Pyongyang to integrated military institutions and to ensure unity of command. This included the Pyongyang Academy, Central Security Officers School, railway security forces, and constabulary training centers. The Security Officer Training Command was actually the model for the headquarters of the KPA. The Commander was Choi Yong gun, later Defense Minister. The Deputy Commander (Political-Cultural Commissar) was Kim Il, former director of the Pyongyang Academy. The Chief of Staff was An Gil. Those three men were core members of Kim Il Sung's group. The Commander of Field Artillery, Mu Jong, from the Yeonan faction. The advisor was the Soviet Major General, Smirunov.

The Training Command built up training centers which later became a division. Young men between 18 and 25 were recruited. These men used Japanese Model-38 rifles before receiving Soviet-made rifles and ammunition in early 1947. In September, 1945, Soviet advisors arrived in North Korean and were assigned into training centers and military schools to teach soldiers. In March, soldiers received newly made Germany uniforms and the officers received Japanese uniforms. The Soviet style rank system was introduced.³²¹ In May, 1947, Kim Il Sung reorganized the Security Officers Training Command into the People's Army Group. The 1st Security Officers Training Center in Kaech'on became the 1st Infantry Division and the 2nd Security Officer Training Center in Nanam became the 2nd Infantry Division. The 3rd Security Officer Training Center in Pyongyang became the 3rd Independent Mixed Brigade (or

³²⁰ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 51-52.

³²¹ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 58-59.

Provisional Division). The Soviet Union furnished these divisions with mortars, howitzers, antitank guns, machine guns, burp guns and rifle.³²² When the Soviet Army left North Korea on 1948, they left most of their equipment behind. Thus, the KPA became equipped with Russian arms. By May, 1947, soldiers of the People's Army Group numbered about 30,000 with 17,000 were trainees. About 10,000 soldiers went to receive military training in the Soviet Union and they became important elements of the KPA.³²³ The following tables shows the KPA's first three divisions.

Unit	CP Location	Commanding Officer	Nucleus of the Unit
1 st Infantry Division	Kaechon	Maj.Gen Chon Sung Hwa	1 st Security Officers Training Center in Kaechon; 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd Regiments, with an artillery regiment
2 nd Infantry Division	Nanam	Maj.Gen. Kang Kon	2 nd Security Officers Training Center in Nanam; 4 th , 5 th , and 6 th Regiments, with an artillery regiment
3 rd Independent and Mixed Brigade	Pyongyang	Maj. Gen. Choi Min Chol	3 rd Security Officers Training Center in Wonsan; 7 th , 8 th , and 9 th Regiments, with an artillery Regiment

Table 12: Establishment of the Infantry Divisions, May 17, 1947³²⁴

When the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded on September 9, 1948, Kim Il Sung reorganized the KPA headquarters as a Ministry of National Defense, including 11 divisions. Because of the Soviet Union's support, the KPA upgraded the 3rd Mixed Brigade to a division and created the 105th Armored Battalion and upgraded this unit to a regiment with sixty T-34 tanks, self-propelled guns, trucks and sidecars.

³²² KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 39.

³²³ Scalapino and Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part Two*, 924.

³²⁴ *Ibid*, 40.

When the Soviet forces had almost withdrawn from North Korea in mid-December 1948, Soviet Defense Minister Field Marshal N. A. Bulganin hosted a meeting of five Soviet generals with representatives from Communist China and North Korea to discuss ways to build the combat strength of the KPA.³²⁵ According to the agenda of this secret meeting, the following topics were discussed:

1. Six infantry divisions shall be organized as assault divisions
2. To form these assault divisions, Communist China will provide 20,000 to 25,000 Korean-born veterans of the Chinese army as cadres for the KPA
3. Besides assault divisions, eight combat and eight reserve divisions shall be organized.
4. Two armored divisions shall be established with 500 tanks furnished by the Soviet Union.
5. In consideration of international repercussions, the formation of air force units shall be put off until the necessary date.³²⁶

A Soviet military delegation, including five generals, twelve colonels, and twenty or so junior officers arrived in North Korea at the end of December, 1948; most of them were armor experts. General Shtykov was appointed as the first ambassador to North Korea.³²⁷ With additional support from the Soviet Union and China, the KPA had ten infantry divisions, three naval garrisons and one air division at the eve of the war, June 1950. These divisions were added between late 1948 and June 1950:

³²⁵ *Ibid*, 42-43.

³²⁶ *Ibid*, 44-45.; 김국현, “북한군의 건설과 패퇴 (1945-1950).” *군사논단* No.61 (Spring, 2010): 18.

³²⁷ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 44.

Unit	Place of Activation	Date of Activation	Nucleus	Subordinate Units
4 th Division	Chinnampo	October 1948	Three infantry regiments from the 4 th Independent Mixed Brigade and six independent units	16 th , 17 th , and 18 th Regiments and an artillery regiment
5 th Division	Nanam	August 1949	10,000 troops from the Northeast Volunteer Army, Chinese 164 th Division	10 th , 11 th , and 12 th Regiments and an artillery regiment
6 th Division	Sinuiju	October 1949	10,000 troops from the Northeast Volunteer Army, Chinese 166 th Division	13 th , 14 th , and 15 th Regiments and an artillery regiment
10 th Division	Sukchon	March 1950	2 nd Democratic Youth League Training Center in South Pyongan Province	25 th , 27 th , and 107 th Regiment and an armored Regiment
12 th Division	Wonsan	May 1950	Northeast Volunteer Army, Chinese 15 th Division, and other Korean-born veterans	30 th , 31 st , and 32 nd Regiments
13 th Division	Sinuiju	June 1950	1 st Democratic Youth League Training Center in North Pyongan Province	19 th , 21 st , and 23 rd Regiments
15 th Division	Hwachon	June 1950	3 rd Democratic Youth League Training Center in North Hamgyong Province	45 th , 29 th , and 50 th Regiments

Table 13: The Additional Activation of the KPA Infantry Divisions³²⁸

The KPA equipped the 12th Division, consisting of Korean veterans of the Chinese 15th Division, and created three new divisions (10th, 13th and 15th) and strengthened combat capability with a total 240 T-34 tanks. The KPA divisions were reinforced with material support from the Soviet Union and returnees from the PLA. More than one third of the KPA troops were combat experienced veterans. In addition to the KPA, Kim Il Sung strengthened the Security Corps under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and increased border security along the 38th parallel.³²⁹

³²⁸ *Ibid*, 47.

³²⁹ *Ibid*, 48.

Unit	CP Location	Date Activation	Security Zone: Strength
1 st 38 th Security Brigade	Kansong	May 1949	Chorwon-Kansong: 5,000
3 rd 38 th Security Brigade	Chukchon	September 1949	West of Haeju-Yellow Sea: 4,000
7 th 38 th Security Brigade	Sibyonri	1949	West of Chorwon-Haeju: 3,000
5 th Railway Security Brigade	Pyongyang	January 1949	All railway lines: 3,000
2 nd Border Security Brigade		September 1949	Yalu-Tumen River vicinity; battalion each in seven security zones: 2,600

Table 14: The Establishment of Security Brigades³³⁰

Compared to the KPA's ground forces, the navy and air force of the KPA remained weak. Kim Il Sung naturally hoped to have strong navy and air force as soon as possible, but building them quickly was a difficult task. The Marine Security Corps was established in July 1946 and had units in Wonsan on the east coast and Chinnamp'o on the west. The Marine Security Corps became the Coast Guard in December 1946 and fell under the authority of the Interior Department. The Coast Guard Officers School was established in July 1947 and was renamed the KPA Naval Officers School with the establishment of the KPA on February 1948. The KPA Navy moved from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of National Defense in December 1949. The navy had 15,000 soldiers and established Garrison Commands in Ch'ongjin, Wonsan, and Chinnamp'o. The navy received more than 30 medium and large sized ships from the Soviet Union. The navy created the 549th Unit before the war and this unit conducted landing operation along the eastern seashore at the initial stage of war.³³¹

³³⁰ *Ibid*, 49.

³³¹ *Ibid*, 50-51.

The air force began as Sinuiju Air Unit in October 1945, with 30 Soviet propeller-driven aircraft, including IL-10's and YAK-9's.³³² The air force of the KPA received an additional 70 IL 10's and YAK-9's from the Soviet Union on April 1950, and 60 more IL-10 attack planes just before the war. Thus, the KPA had more than 210 air planes at the eve of the war.³³³ However, the pilots were not well trained.

By December, 1948, when Soviet military forces withdrew from Korea, the KPA numbered at 50,000 soldiers. This number equaled that of the ROKA in the South. However, the KPA had superior combat capability to that of the ROKA because the KPA resembled a regular army, including regular organization and infantry divisions while the ROKA remained more at the level of a police forces. While the Soviets and Kim Il Sung actively developed the regular army step by step, the US military administration in the South had focused on deterring the expansion of communism and quieting social chaos.³³⁴ Additional troops arrived in 1949 and 1950, when Korean soldiers who participated in the Chinese Civil War returned. They totaled more than 40,000 – 50,000 men.

North Korea began a conscription at the beginning of 1949 and conducted military programs at high schools and universities. Many senior commanders and staff of the KPA were former soldiers of the Kim Il Sung's group, the Soviet-Koreans, or the KVA. However, company-platoon level commanders and staff were usually young men from a peasant background. When the KPA recruited the officers, the first priority was to check family background (peasants or workers) and political ideology. For instance, 40 percent of cadres in

³³² *Ibid*, 41.

³³³ *Ibid*, 50-51.

³³⁴ 김국헌, “북한군의 건설과 패퇴 (1945-1950),” 17-18.

security units of Pyongyang were dismissed on the basis of an unfavorable inspection. Consequently, the successful young officers were generally under-educated because of their lower-class family background, but they strongly endorsed the new communist regime. Before the war, the KPA used a similar standard to recruit and promote young officers for strengthening new elite class members for new regime.

In 1957, the Korean Workers' Party Politburo passed a decree entitled "On the Transformation of Struggle with Counterrevolutionary Elements into an All-People All-Party Movement." Based on this resolution, the entire North Korean population divided into three socio-political classes based on family background (so-called *Chulsin Seongbun*, 出身(origin) 成分(constituent)). First, the core class constituted about 25% of the population and they were family members and relatives of Kim Il Sung or participants of revolutionary independence movement or anti-Japanese guerilla activities during the colonial period. Second, the ordinary class consisted of working people of North Korea, numbering about 55% of the population. Third, the hostile class, consisting of about 20% of the population, were former landowners, merchants, or Christian ministers or their family members.

These divisions of society were derived from Soviet models, as was the policy of selecting officers based on class origin and party loyalty. However, it was based on Soviet policy of the 1930s, when Stalin purged the former Tsarist officers from the Red Army, including Svechin, in order to promote young, politically reliable junior officers into senior ranks. Because they benefited, these young officers did not object to Stalin's purges. Although North Korea was still at the initial stage of Communism revolution, Kim Il Sung jumped immediately to the creation of his own new elites, drawn from the lower class and dedicated to his regime, rather than depending upon established, but potentially disloyal, officers retained from the era of

Japanese occupation. In this policy, Kim Il Sung, took a different approach than the ROKA, which integrated former Japanese officers into its command structure. This different policy provided a good target for North Korean propaganda against the South. For instance, Kim Il Sung singled out Kim Sok-won, former Japanese army officer in the ROK Army, because they had been enemies in Manchuria before liberation. Kim Sok-won tried to kill Kim Il Sung in Manchuria. By 1950, the KPA had grown significantly, even from 1948 levels.

Army	10 Divisions	120,880
	Support and Special Units	61,820
	Subtotal	182,680
Navy and Marine Corps	3 Garrison Commands	4,700
	Naval Combat Team	9,000
Air Force	1 Air Division	2,000
Total		198,380

Table 15: The Strength of the KPA, 1950³³⁵

The South Korean army also grew, but at a slower pace. Although the North Korean and the South Korean armies were at a level of parity in December, 1948, by 1950, the KPA had nearly double the number of troops at the ROKA.

Army	8 Divisions (22 Regiments)	67,416
	Support and Special Branch Units	27,558
	Subtotal	94,974
Navy	3 Flotillas, 7 Security Units	7,715
Marine Corps	2 Battalions	1,166
Air Force	1 Air Wing, 7 Bases	1,897
Total		105,752

Table 16: The Strength of the ROKA³³⁶

³³⁵ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 50

³³⁶ *Ibid*, 89.

Tank and Armored Vehicle	T-34(with 85 mm gun) Armored Vehicle	242 54
Self-Propelled Gun	SU-76 (76 mm)	176
Howitzer	122 mm 76 mm	172 380
Mortar	120 mm 82 mm 61 mm	226 1,142 360
Antitank Gun	45 mm	550
Anti-Aircraft Artillery	85 mm 37 mm	12 24
Air Craft	YAK-9 Fighter Plane IL-10 Fighter Plane IL-2 Fighter Plane Training and Reconnaissance Plane Total	 211
Naval Vessel	Patrol Ship Support Vessel Total	30 80 110

Table 17: The Equipment of the KPA³³⁷

Tanks and Armored Vehicles	Armored Vehicles	27
Self-Propelled Gun		0
Howitzer	105 mm M3	91
Mortar	81 mm 60 mm	384 576
Antitank Gun	57 mm 2.36 inch	140 1,900
Antiaircraft Artillery (AAA)		0
Aircraft	L 4 L 5 T 6 Total	8 4 10 22
Warship	Patrol Ship Support Vessel Total	28 43 71

Table 18: The Equipment of the ROKA³³⁸³³⁷ *Ibid*, 51.³³⁸ *Ibid*, 90.

In terms of military equipment, the KPA also surpassed the ROKA in most categories. While the ROKA had a much larger number of anti-tank guns, the KPA had many more tanks. In every other category, the KPA had more equipment than its South Korean rival.

Initiator Kim Il Sung, Supporter Joseph Stalin

With the approval of the invasion plan, Kim Il Sung visited Moscow and asked for more material support from the Soviet Union. Although many historians emphasize that the Soviet Union provided weapons and equipment to North Korea generously, in fact, the Soviets did not give material support for free. In return, North Korea had to provide a considerable quantity of natural resources, such as gold, silver and lead, and the arrangement did not work fully in North Korea's favor.³³⁹ In addition, much of the equipment North Korea received was old-left over from the Second World War, and of little use to the Soviet Union. Stalin was a cold calculator.

The Soviet advisors advised and taught the North Korean soldiers. When the Security Officers Training Command was established in August, 1946, three generals and 343 advisors from the Soviet Union arrived in North Korea. Until April, 1949, the chief of the Soviet advisors was Major General, Smirunov. General Shtykov served the first Soviet ambassador to North Korea, but his focus was political affairs rather than military issues.³⁴⁰ The number of Soviet

³³⁹기광서, “소련의 한국전 개입과정.” *국제정치논총* 40(3) (November, 2000): 158-159.

³⁴⁰Research on Stykov's role in North Korea and his diaries are as follows: 신범식, “소련의 북한군사지원.” in *한국 전쟁사의 새로운 연구 I* (Seoul: 군사편찬연구소, 2001), 557-624. ; 기광서, “슈티코프, 해방 후 북소관계의 실력자.” *내일을 여는 역사* 24 (June, 2006): 142-154. ; “소련의 한국전 개입과정.” *국제정치논총* 40(3) (November, 2000): 151-172. ; “해방 후 소련의 대한반도정책과 스티코프의 활동.” *중소연구* 93 (May, 2002): 161-192. ;

advisors grew from was 346 men in August, 1946, to 470 men in February, 1948, to, 379 men on 1 March, 1948; to 195 men by the end of March. The number of Soviet advisors vacillated after that; 209 men in December, 1948; 236 men on 24 February, 1949; and 148 men on 1 March, 1950.³⁴¹ During the war, Soviet advisors numbered 239 men. However, most relocated to the Headquarters of the KPA to hide their participation in the war. Because of absence of Soviet advisors in the front line and field, inexperienced KPA commanders, staffs and soldiers made many tactical mistakes, communicating poorly among the units and mishandling equipment and weapons.

In addition, the North Korean government had to pay all expenses for Soviet advisors, including facilities and salaries. The costs were staggering: the budget for Soviet advisors was about 100,000 dollars and for all Soviet forces was about 1.1 million dollars. Even Shtykov, the Soviet ambassador, argued that this budget was too big, amounting to 31% of the North Korea government total budget. He pointed out that this discrepancy would lead to anti-Soviet feeling in North Koreans and financial difficulties for the North Korean government.³⁴² However, Moscow did not accept Shtykov's argument. When Shtykov requested 82 Soviet experts on railway maintenance and management, Stalin replied that only 5-8 experts could be sent to North Korea. Stalin remarked that the Soviet Union did not have to be deeply engaged in North Korea issues. When Stalin talked to Kim Il Sung and Park Hon-yong in Moscow early July, 1946, he

전현수, “특별연구 「쉬띠코프 일기」가 말하는 북한정권의 성립과정.” *역사비평* 32 (August, 1995): 133-162. ; “한국현대사와 소련의 역할(1945~1948), <<쉬띠코프일기>>연구.” *경북사학* 27 (August, 2004): 1-28.

³⁴¹신범식, “소련의 북한군사지원,” 569-570. ; 기광서, “북한무력형성과 북소관계.” *중소연구* 103 (2004): 231.

³⁴²기광서, “슈티코프, 해방 후 북소관계의 실력자,” 154.

stressed the difficulties of maintaining the Soviet Army in Korea and expressed the intention of withdrawing Soviet troops soon. Ki Kwang Seo, Korean historian who studied Soviet advisors of North Korea, points out that this was a small part of unknown Soviet Union's thought about North Korea.³⁴³ Clearly, for the Soviets, Korea was not important. While willing to help the Koreans build their army, Stalin expected the Koreans themselves to fight their own war.³⁴⁴

Historians traditionally have argued that Stalin was deeply engaged in matters surrounding the Korean War. However, close examination of Russian documents from the period 1945-1950 present a much different picture. These documents show that Stalin's participation was passive and his support was limited. It was Kim Il Sung who took the initiative in building the KPA and in planning the war. Stalin often rejected Kim Il Sung's requests to initiate the war against the South, especially before the Soviet Union-PRC treaty of February, 1950, which solidified the relationship between Stalin and Mao. In contemplating war on the Korean peninsula, Stalin strove to maximize Soviet interests and minimize risks to the Soviet Union, while sacrificing his junior partners, North Korea and China. For Stalin, North Korea as merely security buffer zone, Kim Il Sung recognized this reality, and he strove to maximize North Korea's strength through Soviet material aid. The following conversation, from 5 March, 1949, reveals the typical dynamic between Stalin and Kim Il Sung:

Kim Il Sung says that after the liberation of Korea by Soviet troops, the Soviet Government and the Soviet Army rendered aid to Korea in the matter of economic development, in the matter of development of Korea along the democratic path, and that the Korean government understand that without further economic and cultural aid from the Soviet Union it will be difficult for the DPRK to restore and develop its national economy and culture. The

³⁴³기광서, “북한무력형성과 북소관계,” 232-233.

³⁴⁴기광서, “소련의 한국전 개입과정,” 160.

assistance of the Soviet Union is required for the further development of the Korean economy and culture.

Stalin asks what kind of aid.

Kim Il Sung answers – economic and cultural.

Stalin asks what precisely is needed.

Kim Il Sung that They need machines, equipment and spare parts for industry, communications, transport and also for other branches of the national economy. They also need technical assistance: sending Soviet specialists to Korea, drafting plans for the construction of new objects (factories and plants), conducting geological exploratory work.

Stalin says that it is possible to render this assistance, and it is also possible to provide specialists.

Kim indicates...exports from Korea will not cover the imports, therefore they need credit from the Soviet government.

Stalin says “Fine” and asks in what amount they need credit.

Kim answers from 40 to 50 million American dollars....

Kim indicates that they need automobiles, steam engines, equipment for the textile industry, and oil, and that it is hoped that they would receive this during this year.

Stalin answers that in one year it is not possible to do this and asks in what currency they wish to receive credit

Kim answers in American dollars.

Stalin answers that we do not now calculate in dollars but we calculate in rubles and indicated that soon one dollar will equal 5 rubles. Stalin proposed to present equipment and machines in credit in the course of three years in equal portions and indicated that during these three years they will not pay credit, but in the course of the following three years they must produce payment, also in equal portions. For example: credit is given in 1949, 1950, 1951, and perhaps 1952, and payment of credit will begin from the fourth year in equal portions. In such a way, credit will be given out over 6 years. We render assistance to the countries of the people’s democracies according to these principles. We take the following percentage for the credit received: 2% yearly, if the state has recovered (from the war), and 1% if the state has still not recovered. Moreover, close trade in goods between the countries will be continued without credit. This order will be established by agreement...

Stalin indicates that we can record credit in the sum of 200 million rubles, i.e. 40 million dollars.³⁴⁵

It is surprising that the conversation between the two heads of countries constituted a business deal, including calculation of interest rate and currency exchange rate. Stalin took a pragmatic, rather than an ideological, attitude, and he calculated carefully how much support to give to North Korea, and at what cost. In contrast, the US rendered support to South Korea a much more generous terms. However, it must be kept in mind that the Soviet Union suffered terribly during the Second World War and had a long way to recover. Stalin frequently requested Kim Il Sung to send natural resources, such as lead, to the Soviet Union:

I have a request for Comrade Kim Il Sung. The Soviet Union is experiencing a great insufficiency in lead. We would like to receive from Korea a yearly minimum of 25,000 ton of lead. Korea would render us a great assistance if it could yearly send to the Soviet Union the indicated amount of lead. I hope that Kim Il Sung will not refuse us in this.³⁴⁶

North Korea sent the natural resources such as gold, silver and lead, to the Soviet Union in exchange for Soviet military and technical support. But because North Korea was paying for Soviet aid, it preserved a considerable level of autonomy. Ambassador Shtykov wrote in a telegram to Moscow:

In 1950 the Korean People's Democratic Republic, in order to strengthen the people's army and to fully equip it with arms, ammunition and technical equipment, asked the Soviet government to send to Korea military-technical equipment in the amount of 120-150 million rubles, in accordance with an application made earlier to the Government of the USSR. The Korean People's Democratic Republic correspondingly will deliver to the Soviet Union this year. 9 tons of gold – 53,662,900 rubles; 40 tons of silver – 1,887,600 rubles, 15,000 tons of monazite concentrate – 79,500,000 rubles; In all a sum of 133,050,500

³⁴⁵ Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 5 (Spring 1995), 4-5. "Meeting between Stalin and Kim Il Sung." March 5, 1949.

³⁴⁶ "Ciphred telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 January 1950," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 5 (Spring, 1995), 9.

rubles. Korea is interested in the soonest possible receipt of the goods indicated in this application.³⁴⁷

Kim Il Sung was interested not only in military aid, but also in assistance in cultural development. Consequently he asked Stalin, in a conversation in Moscow in 1949:

Kim Il Sung indicates the necessity of cultural ties with the USSR. It is hoped, for example, that Soviet teachers could be sent to Korea for work in Korean institutions of higher education, that Korean students could be sent to the Soviet Union for study, that Korean specialists could be sent to the USSR for practical work in production technology, that teaching programs and literature for institutions of higher education and technical schools could be sent to Korea and that there be exchanges of cultural and artistic figures.³⁴⁸

Kim Il Sung, unlike Stalin, was eager to begin a war to eliminate his rivals in South Korea. He repeatedly sought Stalin's support for an invasion, but Stalin repeatedly refused. However, the Soviet leadership monitored the growing tensions on the Korean peninsula. The Ambassador Shtykov telegraphed Moscow on May 2, 1949, to report North Korean preparation for war:

I report the results of the investigation I have organized of the information about the preparation for the withdrawal of American troops and the preparations of the South Korean army for an attack on North Korea, which were pointed out in your telegram. This information was received by the department of political security of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which is occupied with intelligence gathering in the South...In connection with plans for a military intrusion into the North, South Korean authorities are increasing the size of the "Army of National Defense." According to the reports of our agents, the South Korean Army has increased from 53,600 soldiers as of 1 January 1949, to 70,000 as of the end of the first quarter (of the year). Special attention is paid to the technical, mechanical and special troops, which have grown by 24 times. Measures have been taken to purge the army of 'unreliable' soldiers and officers. Military units are being reinforced by reactionary-minded youths. Americans are transferring to the South Koreans a significant quantity of various types of weapons and ammunition. South Korean authorities are taking measures to receive weapons on a much larger scale. This is the main purpose of Cho Byung-ok's mission in

³⁴⁷ "Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinsky transmitting note from Kim Il Sung to Soviet Government, March 9, 1950," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 6-7 (Winter 1995/1996), 37.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 5. "Stalin's Meeting with Kim Il Sung, Moscow, 5 March, 1949"

Washington. South Korean authorities have concentrated a large number of troops in areas adjoining the 38th parallel.³⁴⁹

The Soviet Union indeed had grounds for concern Syngman Rhee's regime took more aggressive postures against North after a serious struggle the SKWP's guerilla uprisings in 1948 and 1949. Syngman Rhee feared North Korean preemptive attack of South, so he continually asked the US government for more heavy weapons and equipment. The US government hesitated to provide heavy weapons to the ROK Army, concerned that South Korea might launch a preemptive attack on North, the Soviet Union. Despite Syngman Rhee's aggressive political speech about reunifying Korea militarily. ROK Army did not prepare for a preemptive strike anytime between 1945 and 1950. But North Korea did not trust Syngman Rhee to refrain attack, and its agents' reports of South Korean preparations for war. Based on these reports, both North Korea and the Soviet Union overestimated the strength of the ROK Army and the danger of a South Korean first strike. Shtykov reported:

According to the information received, the total number of troops in this area has reached 41,000 persons. The South Korean authorities are paying special attention to the Pyongyang direction. According to the report of the commander of a South Korean battalion, who is connected to the North's intelligence service, the number of troops in the Pyongyang direction will be increased to 30,000. The plans for the operation against the North have been worked out and in the first brigade they have already been passed to the battalion commanders. The actions are supposedly planned for the month of June. In connection with these plans the South Korean authorities are taking decisive measures to suppress uprisings in the South and to defeat completely the democratic movement.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁹ "Telegram from Stykov on Preparations for an attack on North Korea, May 02, 1949." Kathryn Weathersby, "Should We Fear This?: Stalin and the Danger of War with America," *Cold War International History Project working paper* 39 (2002), 21-23.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 22. "Telegram from Stykov on Preparations for an attack on North Korea, May 02, 1949."

Shtykov explained more details of the ROK Army's possible invasion plan of North. In addition, he reported North Korean concerns about infiltration by intelligence agents loyal to the South:

Agents of the South have set up terrorist and subversive groups in every province in the North, which are ordered to recruit new members, conduct espionage, and draft plans for uprisings. In case military operations begin, they must carry out diversion, terror and organize an uprising. These groups receive grenades and guns from the South, and, as arrested persons confess, in May they will receive additional weapons. Such groups have been uncovered in Pyongyang (2), Haeju (1), and Sinuiju (1).³⁵¹

Even before the onset of overt war, both the North Korea and the South Korean governments engaged in extensive espionage and even assassination attempts against each other. The South Korean government massively investigated North Korean spies, and suspected some ROK Army officers of pro-North Korean sympathies.³⁵² The future President Park Jung Hee was arrested because of his older brother was the member of the SKWP. Kim Il Sung nearly fell victim to a bombing terror. Prominent South Korean politician Yo Un Hyong and Kim Ku were assassinated. In this unstable political situation, information about possible terrorists and insurgent leaders generated still greater hostility between South and North. This concern about enemy infiltration helps to explain Kim Il Sung's decision to appoint only officers recommended by high officials, who had proven loyalty to his regime.

Why did the Soviets and North Korean intelligences overestimate a military strength so much? The answer to this question was relevant to complex political situation of North Korea. The Soviet embassy in Pyongyang reported daily and weekly political situation to the Kremlin. Because the Soviets did not know Korean language, culture and history, the Soviets heavily

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, 23.

³⁵² 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 574-582.

depended on sources of Korean agents in South Korea, who were members of SKWP.³⁵³ Based on the members of the SKWP, the Soviets in the embassy gathered information about the political, economic, military and social situation of South Korea. Among them, the reports from 1946 to 1947 are now located in the Russian Ministry of Defense National Archives and the National Institute of Korean History.³⁵⁴ The interesting thing is that these Korean agents generally overestimated not only the threats of the ROK Army and the Syngman Rhee's regime but also their achievement for their own interest. Park Myong Lim points out that the pro-North Korea guerilla forces' leader Lee Seing Youp and Kim Sam Ryong overstated threats of the ROK Army and the Syngman Rhee regime and their capability to achieve revolution in South Korea because of their revolutionary passion and aspiration.³⁵⁵

Park Hon-young, the leader of the SKWP and later the first foreign minister of DPRK, was a potential political rival against Kim Il Sung and these Korean agents in South Korea were his men. Park Hon-young's political power and his subordinates were largely based on South Korea, not North Korea. During the making of invasion plan, Park Hun Young assumed a large uprising of the SKWP members when the KPA invaded of South. Later, Kim Il Sung strongly blamed Park Hong-young regarding this wrong assumption during the war because Kim Il Sung believed Park Hon-young's assumption on uprising of his men in South Korea.³⁵⁶ It is not sure how much Korean agents in South overestimated the threats of the ROK Army and the Syngman

³⁵³ 기광서, “[역비논단]해방 직후 조선공산당에 대한 소련의 입장.” *역사비평* 65 (November, 2003): 230-231.

³⁵⁴ 국사편찬위원회, *소련군정문서, 남조선 정세보고서, 1946-1947*. 러시아 연방 국방성 중앙문서보관소 (서울: 국사편찬위원회, 2003)

³⁵⁵ 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 824-831.

³⁵⁶ 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 1, 279-282. ; 박병엽, *박병엽 증언록 2 전 노동당 고위간부가 본 비밀회동 김일성과 박헌영 그리고 여운형* (Seoul: 선인, 2010), 298-314.

Rhee's regime. When the Kremlin and Pyongyang worried about the invasion of the ROK Army in 1949, these Korean agents of the SCV, members of the SKWP, were under the massive attack of the Syngman Rhee's administration and in guerilla war in Jiri mountain area and other area.³⁵⁷ These Korean agents feared their survivals because of attacks of the ROK Army. Thus, Park Hon-yong and they desperately hoped the unification by revolutionary forces of the KPA as soon as possible.³⁵⁸ In daily life, these Korean agents faced actual threats of the ROK Army in the guerilla battles. In this context, the SCV (and DPRK) did an intelligence failure because of flaw sources – SWKP members, and failed to assess the real military strength of the ROK Army. During the guerilla battles during 1948 and 1949, the members of the SKWP and the guerilla forces, such as Kim Sam Ryong and Ch'oi Chang Ik, the pro-North leaders of guerilla forces in South Korea, had continually reported overestimation of their achievement to Pyongyang and showed their unrealistic fantasy and revolutionary romanticism for their success of revolution in South Korea near future.³⁵⁹

Until the Korean War, the ROK Army was a very weaker army than the KPA. The ROK army did not have heavy artillery, tanks and anti-tank guns because the US Army hesitated to

³⁵⁷ 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2 기원과 원인*, 643-651.

³⁵⁸ 박병엽, *박병엽 증언록 2 전 노동당 고위간부가 본 비밀회동 김일성과 박헌영 그리고 여운형*, 315-323. ; 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1*, 324-326.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 827-831. Research on guerilla forces (빨찌산) and guerilla battles in South Korea from 1945 to 1953 as follows: 이선아, “[연구논문] 한국전쟁 전후 빨찌산의 형성과 활동.” *역사연구* 13 (December, 2003): 155-188. ; “여순사건 이후 빨찌산 활동과 그 영향.” *역사연구* 20 (June, 2011): 175-205. ; “한국전쟁기 강원·경북지역 빨찌산 활동 연구노트.” *역사연구* 23 (December, 2012): 183-199. ; 김영택, “[연구논문] 한국전쟁기 남한 내 적색 빨찌산의 재건과 소멸(1950.10.5-1954.4.5) 전남 총사령부와 6 개 지구를 중심으로.” *한국 근현대사 연구* 27 (December, 2003): 133-166. ; 김진환, “빨찌산, 역사의 격랑에 선 사람.” *역사비평* 94 (February, 2011): 298-328. ; 김종준, “한국전쟁기 서부경남지역 빨찌산의 조직과 활동: 1950 년 10 월~1951 년 6 월을 중심으로.” *제노사이드 연구* 2 (August, 2007): 15-61.

send them to the ROK Army. Thus, the ROK Army mainly conducted police roles not combat roles. The ROK army did not have any military capability and logistic to initiate the conventional war against North. Syngman Rhee's speeches were aggressive, but the ROK army was very weak. Institutionally, the ROK Army was unprepared for the war. At the eve of the war, the ROK Army was in transition. Most commanders had just arrived in their position at that time. Most commanders had only been in their jobs for only some months and weeks. The Soviet Union and North Korea overestimate the strength of the ROK Army but they had fear of the ROK Army's preemptive strike regardless of actual capability of the ROK Army.

Despite reservations about North Korea's preparedness for a quick victory over the South, Stalin was committed to building up the KPA into a superior military force. It would defend against a preemptive attack from the South in the shorter term, and prepare for a war of conquest against the South in the longer term. But, it was Kim Il Sung who was most eager to prepare the KPA for a future invasion of South. Syngman Rhee's ambition to initiate an invasion of the North, concerned that it could trigger a bigger conflict. That was why the US restricted its equipment supplies to South Korea or accede to Syngman Rhee's request to increase rapidly the ROKA's combat capabilities. In contrast, the Soviet Union provided much more military aid- albeit at a price- and shared North Korea's commitment to enhancing its combat capability. Yet, the decision to use the KPA offensively against the South ultimately lay with Kim Il Sung, even though he could act only with Soviet consent. In this uncertain situation of Korean peninsula, Kim Il Sung initiated his ambitious plan to unify Korea by military forces. Shtykov reported to the Kremlin on 3 September, 1949:

Kim Il Sung asks permission to begin military operations against the south, with the goal of seizing the Ongjin peninsula and part of the territory of South Korea to the east of the Ongjin peninsula, approximately to Kaesong, so as to

shorten the line of defense. Kim Il Sung considers if the international situation permits, they are ready to move further to the south. Kim Il Sung is convinced that they are in a position to seize South Korea in the course of two weeks, maximum 2 months.³⁶⁰

The Kremlin rejected Kim's idea because the Kremlin thought North Korea was unprepared militarily and politically, and that the South was insufficiently oriented towards revolution. The Politburo ruled:

From the military side it is impossible to consider that the People's Army is prepared for such an attack. If not prepared for in the necessary manner, the attack can turn into a prolonged military operation, which not only will not lead to the defeat of the enemy but will also create significant political and economic difficulties for North Korea, which, finally, cannot be permitted. Since at present North Korea does not have the necessary superiority of military forces in comparison with South Korea, it is impossible to acknowledge that a military attack on the south is now completely prepared for and therefore from the military point of view it is not allowed.

From the political side, a military attack on the south by you is also not prepared for. We, of course, agree with you that the people are waiting for the unification of the country and in the south, they, moreover, are waiting for liberation from the yoke of the reactionary regime. However, until now very little has been done to raise the broad masses of South Korea to an active struggle, to develop the partisan movement in all of South Korea, to create there liberated regions and to organize forces for a general uprising. Meanwhile, only in conditions of a people's uprising which has begun and is truly developing, which is undermining the foundations of the reactionary regime, could a military attack on the south play a decisive role in the overthrow of the South Korean reactionaries and provide the realization of the task of the unification of all Korea into a single democratic state. Since at present very little has been done to develop the partisan movement and prepare for a general uprising in South Korea, it is also impossible to acknowledge that from a political side an attack by you on the south has been prepared.³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, "*Ciphered Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinsky, 3 September, 1949*," accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112129> (accessed April 21, 2015).

³⁶¹ Politburo decision to confirm the following directive to the Soviet ambassador in Korea. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, "*Telegram from Tunkin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in Reply to 11 September Telegram, 24 September 1949*," accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112133> (accessed April 21, 2015).

On September 14, 1949, the Soviet Foreign Ministry expressed similar reservations. It added concerns about the intervention of the US and possibly Japan and Nationalist China as well:

According to official data, there are 500 American military advisers and instructors in South Korea. According to secret service information, which needs confirmation, there are 900 American military advisers and instructors and 1500 soldiers and security officers in South Korea. In case of civil war in Korea, the Americans, in the opinion of Kim Il Sung and Park Heon-yeong, can: send Japanese and Chinese (soldiers) to the aid of the southerners; support (the South Koreans) from the sea and air with their own means; American instructors will take immediate part in organizing military actions. The North Korean army numbers 97,500 men (including air force and coastal defense units). The army has 64 tanks, 59 armored cars, 75 airplanes. The police force in the north numbers 23,300 men. Kim considers that the northern army is superior to the southern army in its technical equipment (tanks, artillery, planes), its discipline, the training of the officers and troops, and also in its moral-political relations. In the northern army there are a number of insufficiencies: insufficient number and weak preparation of pilots, insufficient number of ships, large caliber arms are unprepared for military operations, insufficient military supplies... The northern army is insufficiently strong to carry out successful and rapid operations against the south. Even taking into account the help which will be rendered to the northern army by the partisans and the population of South Korea it is impossible to count on a rapid victory. Moreover, a drawn out civil war is disadvantageous for the north both militarily and politically.³⁶²

The Kremlin always predicted the US intervention, and cited it as a further reason to postpone the North Korean invasion of the south:

In the first place, a drawn out war gives the possibility to the Americans to render corresponding aid to Syngman Rhee. After their lack of success in China, the American probably will intervene in Korean affairs more decisively than they did in China and, it goes without saying, apply all their strength to save Syngmann Rhee. Further, in case of a drawn out civil war the military casualties, suffering and adversity may elicit in the population a negative mood toward the one who began the war. Moreover, a drawn out war in Korea could be used by the American for purposes of agitation against the Soviet Union and

³⁶²Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, “*Telegram from Tunkin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in Reply to 11 September Telegram, September 14, 1949,*” accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112132> (accessed April 21, 2015).

for further inflaming war hysteria. Therefore, it is inadvisable that the north begin a civil war now. Given the present internal and external situation a decision about an attack on the south would be correct only in such case as the northerners could count on ending the war quickly; the preconditions for it are not there.³⁶³

Despite the clear logic in the Soviet assessment of the situation in September, 1949, the Soviet attitude had changed by January 1950. Historians have cited several consequential events explain the shift: victory of the Chinese Communists in China (October, 1949); the Soviet atomic bomb test (August 29, 1949); Dean Acheson's speech (January 12, 1950) that Secretary Acheson announced that the US government excluded the Korean peninsula outside the US defense perimeter; and most of all, the incorporation into the KPA of divisions that returned from China. However, the Soviets certainly already knew about the Chinese victory, the Soviet atomic bomb, and the American position. The incorporation of Korean units from China already occurred September, 1949. Even Acheson's speech could hardly have convinced Soviet leaders that the US would not intervene in case of an invasion from North Korea. So what had changed? Kremlin's global security strategy. Once Soviet Union and PRC signed their treaty in February, 1950, Stalin could acquiesce to Kim Il Sung's pleas to initiate the invasion. The Soviets believed that China would provide the necessary help to North Korea, if it could not achieve a quick victory alone, and thus the Soviets would never need to commit troops of their own. He gave permission not because that the US was unlikely to intervene, but despite the some possibility that this would happen. Even so, the Soviet leadership regarded the war as Kim Il Sung's battle, and not that of the Soviet Union, as Krushchev noted.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ *Ibid*, accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112132> (accessed April 21, 2015).

³⁶⁴ I cited Krushchev's memoir that Stalin thought the Korean War as Kim Il Sung's War in the chapter two. See Thornton, *Odd Man Out*, 408; Jerrold L. Shechter and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov,

Stalin did not allow Chinese intervention when the US forces entered the Pusan pier. Just two weeks after the beginning of the war, Mao informed Stalin that the 370,000 Chinese forces in north of the Yalu River were ready to enter North Korea. Even Kim Il sung told Stalin that he needed Chinese forces as soon as possible, before the UN forces moved north. However, Stalin never replied to their requests.³⁶⁵ But while withholding approval for Chinese support for North Korea, Stalin recommended to Kim Il Sung a contingency plan, if UN forces approached the Yalu River. He advised Kim to flee from North Korea, and instead start guerilla revolutionary warfare in Manchuria. Indeed, some members of Kim Il Sung's family, including his son Kim Jong Il, fled to Manchuria. Kim Il Sung was very upset and disappointed because he requested several time to Stalin an international volunteer forces to help him.³⁶⁶ Finally Stalin gave his consent for Chinese military aid, but only when the UN forces almost reached the Yalu River.

ed., *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tape* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990), 146; Strobe Talbott, ed., *Khrushchev Remembers* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1971), 370.

³⁶⁵ Shen Zhi-hua, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force," 53-54.

³⁶⁶ Kathryn Weathersby and 강규형, "북-중-소 삼각관계가 6.25 전쟁 과정과 전후 북한외교 행태에 미친 영향: 기밀해제문서를 중심으로," 135.

7. External Factor: Chinese Civil War's Influence

The Chinese Red Army is an armed body for carrying out the political tasks of the revolution.

Especially at present, the Red Army should certainly not confine itself to fighting; besides fighting to destroy the enemy's military strength, it should shoulder such important tasks as doing propaganda among the masses, organizing the masses, arming them, helping them to establish revolutionary political power and setting up Party organizations. The Red Army fights not merely for the sake of fighting but in order to conduct propaganda among the masses, organize them, arm them, and help them to establish revolutionary political power. Without these objectives, fighting loses its meaning and the Red Army loses the reason for its existence.³⁶⁷

Mao Tse-tung

North Korea's political culture had diverse unique characteristics: Kim Il Sung's personal cult, top-down hierarchy, family as the core unit of society and mass politics.³⁶⁸ This North Korean political system shared not only the centralism and top-down principles of administration characteristic of the Stalinist system of the Soviet Union, but also the family values of the Asian culture (Confucianism). However, as Bruce Cumings points out, the Stalinist system and the Confucian culture do not sufficiently explain North Korea's political culture³⁶⁹ Cumings argues that Kim's experience in the CCP significantly influenced his worldview, noting that Kim always talked about Mao's words and philosophy, including the significance of the masses.³⁷⁰ Charles Armstrong points out that Mao and the Chinese revolution more influenced Kim Il Sung's political thinking and North Korea's *Juche* ideology than the Soviet ideas did because of

³⁶⁷ Foreign Languages Press, "On Correcting Mistake Ideas in the Party (December 1929)" in *Selective Works of Mao Tse-Tung* (Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 1:106. ; Foreign Language Press, *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung* (Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1966), 1: 100.

³⁶⁸ Bruce Cumings, "Corporatism in North Korea." *Journal of Korean Studies*, 4 (1982-1983): 291.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 276.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 285. ; Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* Volume 2, 352.

geographical proximity and cultural affinities between China and North Korea.³⁷¹ Chinese influence was particularly significant in the KPA because many members of the KPA had long experiences in the CCP and the PLA for more than a decade, including Kim Il Sung himself.

In this chapter, I explain how China influenced the North Korean People's Army. First, I explain Sino-North Korean relations from the 1930's to the Chinese Civil War. I argue that the partnership between Chinese communists' and Koreans had a three-stage development corresponding to the three wars from the 1930s to 1953. Throughout this period, they shared one revolutionary identity. I also argue that the relationship between China and North Korea was a long term personal friendship while the relationship between the Soviet Union and North Korea was a temporary business partnership. Historically, China and North Korea had a love-hate relationship over decades until the eve of the Korean War, but their teeth-lips relationship (唇齒 – close relationship according to a Chinese maxim) did not change.³⁷² Chinese people, more specifically Mao's communists, needed Korean people as soldiers in China and the North Korean government's aid from 1945 to 1949 in order to secure their victory in the Chinese Civil War. The Japanese government in Manchuria pursued a deliberate policy to create antagonisms between Koreans and Chinese. After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, the Chinese Nationalist Army purged and killed many ethnic Korean people in Manchuria.³⁷³ However, Mao's Army

³⁷¹ Charles Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*, 245.

³⁷² Many Chinese and Korean leaders historically enjoyed to use Chinese maximum “Teeth-Lips Relations” when they explain Sino-Korea relations. Chiang Kai Shek, Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung used this expression. From 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2*, 603.

³⁷³ Lee Bok Ryong, the former KVA, PLA Independent 156th Division and later the KPA 6th Division soldier, remembers that Chinese local rebels who attacked Koreans in Manchuria supported the Chinese nationalists. See 정현수, *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁* (Seoul: 선인, 2006), 170-171. Kim Byong Wook, the former KVA, the PLA Independent 156th Division and later the KPA 12th Division soldier, remembers that Chinese local rebels who supported

was good to ethnic Korean people because they needed them to strengthen their weaker military against the Chinese Nationalist Army.³⁷⁴ Therefore, most ethnic Korean people helped the PLA and participated in the PLA. Soldiers of the KVA worked with Chinese communists against the Japanese Army in Manchuria for a long time and started to help the PLA after the Japanese surrendered in 1945. During the Chinese Civil War from 1945 to 1949, Mao's communists not only benefited from the participation of ethnic Korean soldiers in the PLA, but also benefitted from the support of the North Korean government; the North Korean government actively helped the PLA. At the micro level, Sino-North Korea cooperation was very active from 1945 to 1950. By the eve of the Korean War, China and North Korea had shared interests and history, and the KPA was a symbol of the special relationship. Many soldiers and elites of the KPA who came back from China from 1945 to 1950 were former Chinese Communist Party members and People's Liberation Army soldiers, including Kim Il Sung himself.³⁷⁵

Secondly, I explain the social and cultural contribution of the former PLA soldiers of the KPA. I argue that these veterans from the Chinese Civil War failed in their dreams to unite Korea and to expel the US Army because Kim Il Sung checked the rise of these veterans' influence over the KPA and he failed to use maximally the military capability of the KPA. Ten out of twenty-one regiments of the KPA (47%) consisted of former PLA soldiers in the front when the Korean War started.³⁷⁶ More than half of the commanders of corps, divisions and

Chinese nationalists attacked ethnic Koreans in Manchuria after the Japanese surrendered in 1945. See *Ibid*, 138-139.

³⁷⁴이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 1 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 1).” *전략연구* 11, (November 1997): 298-299.

³⁷⁵ 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2*, 730-731.

³⁷⁶염인호, “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로,” 133.

regiments were veterans of the PLA or guerilla forces in China.³⁷⁷ These soldiers were mostly soldiers of the KVA, except small numbers of veterans of the Soviet special 88th brigades, Kim Il Sung's group. I explain the history of the KVA and its activities during the Chinese Civil War, pointing out the clear Chinese characteristics that the KPA inherited, resulting in strengths and weaknesses that impacted the combat capability of the KPA. Therefore, the Chinese influence over soldiers of the KPA had developed over a long time and was more natural, while the amity between North Korea and the Soviet Union was artificial and temporary. Cultural affinity and a shared history between China and North Korea was long and strong.

However, because of this closeness between the two, before and during the war, Kim Il Sung seriously worried about Chinese political influence over domestic affairs and its intervention in his struggle for power. The Soviet Union also worried about the rise of Chinese influence over the Korean peninsula before the war.³⁷⁸ During the Korean War, Kim Il Sung had a tense relationship with Peng Dehuai, the commander of the CVF. Kim was humiliated by China many times.³⁷⁹ After the war, Kim Il Sung never forgot this humiliation and started to purge pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet politicians. He manipulated his two giant partners for his own interests during the Sino-Soviet split period.³⁸⁰ The *Juche*-Ideology was made in this context.

³⁷⁷ 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 720.

³⁷⁸ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* Volume 2, 352.

³⁷⁹ 김태현, “조중연합사가 조선인민군 재편성에 미친 영향.” *軍事* no 76 (September 2010): 221.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Korean War 2).” *전략연구* 16, (July 1999): 237-238. Kathryn Weathersby and 강규형, “북-중-소 삼각관계가 6.25 전쟁 과정과 전후 북한외교 행태에 미친 영향: 기밀해제문서를 중심으로,” 134-139.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 135-134.

Even though Sino-North Korea relations today are still considered especially close - teeth-lips – we should keep in mind that teeth and lips sometimes hurt each other.

Sino-North Korean Relations

Until the end of the Cold War, research about pre-war history of Sino-North Korean relations was limited because of a lack of available sources. Allen Whiting first focused on Sino-North Korean relations in the Korean War historiography during the 1960's despite a limitation of Chinese primary sources. Whiting points out a participation of massive ethnic Korean PLA soldiers in the KPA before the Korean War.³⁸¹ During the 1980s, Cumings focuses on the North Korea-China connection and argues that it was under-researched and also that it was more important in regard to North Korean society than the relationship with the Soviet Union.³⁸² After the Cold War, Korean and Chinese researchers published many books in Chinese and Korean language about Sino-North Korea relations, using Chinese sources and interviewing with surviving ethnic Koreans in Manchuria. These publications not only focus on the stories of big names, such as Mao and Kim Il Sung, but also shed light on the stories of many unknown, ordinary people, such as ethnic Koreans in Manchuria, former soldiers of the CVF and overseas Chinese people in North Korea.

Sino-North Korean relations developed into a longtime friendship and brotherhood during the anti-Japanese period of the 1930's. The PLA soldiers and ethnic Koreans of China

³⁸¹ Allen S. Whiting, *China Cross the Yalu: The Decision To Enter the Korean War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960), 44.

³⁸² Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*. Volume 2, 350.

together fought against the Japanese Army in Manchuria. At this time, ethnic Koreans in China joined the guerilla forces under the Chinese leadership, mainly the CCP. These young Korean men believed that they could advance the independence of their homeland, Korea, if they fought alongside Chinese people against the Japanese Army. After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, ethnic Koreans in China participated in the Chinese Civil War against the Nationalist Army. They hoped that a communist China would help to liberate the Southern part of Korea from the US imperialists. For instance, Lee Bok Ryong, a former soldier in the KVA, the PLA Independent 156th Division and later the KPA 6th Division, fought against the Nationalist Army in the Jangchun battle, Yangtze River battle and other areas because he believed the Chinese Civil War constituted a continuation of battle against the Japanese Army for an independent homeland, Korea.³⁸³ The partnership between ethnic Koreans and the PLA was long established, and based in their mutual interests.

I argue that the partnership between Chinese communists and Koreans embodied a revolutionary identity that developed in three stages through three sequential wars from the 1930s to 1953. Their first war was the battle against the Japanese Army in Manchuria during the 1930s and early 1940s. Their common enemy was the Japanese Army. Their second war was the Chinese Civil War from 1945 to 1949, and their common enemy was the Chinese Nationalist Army. The third and final war was the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, and their common enemy was the US and the ROK Army. They saw these three wars as not separate but rather as a continuous struggle towards achieving their long time goal - to expel foreign invaders from their home countries. When the first stage of war ended and the second stage of war (the Chinese Civil War) started in 1945, ethnic Koreans and the North Korean government passionately helped the

³⁸³ 정현수, *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁*, 172-180.

PLA.³⁸⁴ During the Korean War, millions of CVF soldiers defended North Korea against the US forces and died in North Korea. Cooperation between Chinese communists and Koreans was strong and based in long shared sacrifice and brotherhood. Although scholars have long recognized Chinese assistance to North Korea during the Korean War, they have not previously grasped the degree to which the Chinese-North Korean relationship had long been reciprocal.

During the Chinese Civil War, Koreans' provided two types of cooperation: ethnic Koreans joined the PLA, and the North Korean government provided support. Why did ethnic Koreans in China choose to help the Chinese communists, and not Chinese nationalists? About 2.16 million ethnic Koreans lived in China in 1945 and most of them lived in Manchuria.

Historically, Manchuria was not only home to Chinese people, but also for large numbers of Koreans. Some areas of Manchuria, such as Yangbin, were primarily occupied ethnic Koreans for several hundred years. For longer than a thousand years, there was no clear border between China and Korea in the Manchurian region. Therefore, in this area, identities were not only national or ethnic, but also they were more socially and geographically constructed, connected with localities in Manchuria.³⁸⁵ The Japanese government in Manchuria created antagonisms between Koreans and Chinese by pursuing a deliberate policy. The Japanese government established three categories of people: the first, Japanese, the second, Koreans, and the third, Chinese.³⁸⁶ The Japanese government massively plundered Chinese lands and provided them to Koreans for farming. Because of this Japanese alienation policy, tensions increased between the

³⁸⁴ Jian, *China's Road To the Korean War*, 108-109.

³⁸⁵ 염인호, “중국 연변 조선족의 민족정체성에 대한 고찰(1945.8-1950.말).” 한국사연구회, *한국사연구* 140 (March, 2008): 147-148.

³⁸⁶ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 1 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 1),” 298.

Chinese and Koreans. After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, Chinese local rebels launched large-scale attacks on Korean people. For instance, the Korean population in Yoneang and Gilim provinces decreased from 400,000 to 9,496 under the Chinese Nationalist government.³⁸⁷ The Chinese Nationalist government in Manchuria neglected this because the Chinese Nationalist government ignored this because it needed local Chinese support to occupy Manchuria against the Chinese Communists. Korean people escaped from the area under attack by the Chinese Nationalist government and went to the area protected by the Chinese communists. Because the position of Chinese communists were much weaker than the Chinese nationalists in Manchuria, they needed local Koreans to fight against nationalists. Many Koreans already worked with the CCP and the PLA against the Japanese and more Koreans joined the PLA to fight for survival against the nationalists. Their numbered total 62,942 and this was about 5% of the total ethnic Koreans in China.³⁸⁸ These ethnic Koreans who joined the Chinese Civil War were the KVA soldiers and they gained many military experiences.

As part of the efforts of the CCP to build the identity of the PRC during the Chinese Civil War, ethnic Korean identity became more pronounced. At this time, Chinese people started to identify themselves as Chinese, and Koreans as Korea.³⁸⁹ After the liberation, in 1947, many ethnic Koreans of them returned to their historic homeland, Korea; while 1.1 million remained in Manchuria.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 299.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 297.

³⁸⁹ Charles Kraus and Adam Cathcart, "Nation, Ethnicity, and the Post-Manchukuo Order in the Sino-Korean Border Region." in *Key Papers on Korea: Essays Celebrating 25 Years of the Centre of Korean Studies, SOAS, University of London*, edited by Andrew David Jackson (Bost: Global Oriental, 2013): 79-81.

³⁹⁰ 이종석, "국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 1 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 1)," 298.

The North Korean government itself was also a close partner of the PLA. Except domestic communists, most leaders of the North Korean government, including Kim Il Sung's group and the Yeonan faction, closely worked with the CCP and the PLA for more than a decade to fight against the Japanese Army. In particular, the longtime friendship between the two naturally led to strong support by the North Korean government for the PLA during the Chinese Civil War. North Korean support in Manchuria was one of the most important factors in the PLA's victory over the Chinese nationalist army. Manchuria occupied about 25% of the territory of China, and it contained about 10% of the Chinese population; furthermore, it was a critical industry area and granary zone. Factories in Manchuria produced four times more products than the Chinese mainland and this area produced three times more electric power than the Chinese mainland.³⁹¹ Manchuria was a very strategic area to both the PLA and the Nationalist Army.³⁹² Without winning the Manchuria area, the PLA and the Nationalist Army could not guarantee their victory of the war. In late 1946, the Nationalist Army numbered about 2.6 million soldiers while the PLA reached 1 million soldiers.³⁹³ Because the Nationalist Army dominated most parts of Chinese territory, Manchuria was a final hope for Mao and the PLA. After winning the Manchuria area battles in late 1947, the PLA then advanced to the Northeast areas, such as Beijing, and finally won the war. The victory of the PLA in Manchuria was a turning point of the Chinese Civil War. The North Korean government provided the most significant support for the victory of the PLA when they were at risk.

³⁹¹ *Ibid*, 288.

³⁹² Jian, *China's Road To the Korean War*, 109.

³⁹³ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3).” *전략연구* 13, (September 1998): 248.

The North Korean government provided primarily three types of support to the PLA – the use of land, traffic routes, and a logistical support. First, the North Korean government provided a rear area for the PLA inside of North Korea’s territory. In late 1946, about 18,000 PLA soldiers, their families and wounded soldiers retreated into North Korea when the Chinese nationalist army advanced into a southern part of Manchuria.³⁹⁴ Among them, some PLA soldiers were trained in the units and facilities of the KPA. Wounded PLA soldiers stayed separately in civilians’ homes in North Korea. About 85% of the total logistics of southern Manchuria PLA were located in North Korea’s territory. Chinese communists moved their factories of ammunition and weapons to North Korea in early 1946.³⁹⁵ Thus, North Korea provided the supply and logistical lines that were crucial for the PLA to operate successfully.

Secondly, the North Korean government provided logistical routes for the PLA. When the Nationalist Army dominated most railways of Manchuria in 1946, the PLA could not move their supplies, soldiers and logistics between units. The North Korean government provided the PLA with railway and sea routes across North Korean territories. The North Korean government ceased operations on their railway and placed the PLA’s needs first. About 210,000 tons of the PLA’s supplies traveled these routes for seven months in early 1947 and 300,900 tons of supplies were moved for the entire year of 1948. In late 1946, the PLA moved 3,000 soldiers 18 times by using this North Korean railway. In the first six months of 1947, about 10,000 PLA soldiers used this railway and about 20,000 PLA soldiers used this railway in 1948.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 2).” *전략연구* 12, (April 1998): 243.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 244.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 245-246.; Jian, *China’s Road To the Korean War*, 108-109.

Finally, the North Korean government provided logistical support to the PLA. The North Korean government served in the role of ammunitions factory for the PLA. During the two and half year tenure of the “Office of the Northeast Bureau in Korea” (Dongbei ju zhu Chaoxian banshichu) from July or August 1946 to February 1949, approximately two thousand trucks containing of logistical supplies went to the PLA from North Korea. During 1946 and 1947, the PLA purchased 420 tons of explosives, 200 tons of nitric acid, 3 million detonators, 1.2 million meter of fuses and 150,000 shoes.³⁹⁷ Sometimes, the PLA reciprocated support to the North Korean government. For instance, Zhou Baozhong, who was a former commander of Kim Il Sung, sent 150 tons of grain to Kim Il Sung University in November, 1948.³⁹⁸

During the Chinese Civil War, the North Korean government produced many governmental publications regarding the Chinese Civil War because North Koreans could learn from the PLA experiences. Adam Cathcart and Charles Kraus researched publications of the North Korean government regarding the Chinese Civil War. They argued that the Chinese Civil War was an attractive topic to publish news to the North Korean government and the CCP's victories played a significant role in securing the domestic and international outlook of North Korea.³⁹⁹ The North Korean government not only supported the PLA in its victories in the Chinese Civil War but also used the war for, educational and propaganda purpose to inform their people.

³⁹⁷ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 2),” 249.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 250. ; Jian, *China's Road To the Korean War*, 108-109.

³⁹⁹ Adam Cathcart and Charles Kraus, “Internationalist Culture in North Korea, 1945-1950.” *The Review of Korean Studies* 11, no. 3 (September 2008): 134.

Communication between China and North Korea continued by both official and unofficial routes. The official route was “Office of the Northeast Bureau in Korea” (Dongbei ju zhu Chaoxian banshichu) in Pyongyang, which was built in July or August of 1946. The CCP dispatched two agents, Zhu Lizhi and Xiao Jinguang to build this office because the PLA needed traffic routes in North Korea as a rear area. This office disguised its purpose, calling itself “Pyongyang Limin Company” (Pingrang limin gongsi).⁴⁰⁰ It had four local offices in Nampo, Sinuiju, Manpo and Najin. About 100 men worked at the headquarter office in Pyongyang. The office of Najin had 100 officers and 500 laborers because Najin was a port city and managed receipt of materials from the sea. Offices of Sinuiju and Manpo managed wounded PLA soldiers and movement of logistics and supplies because two cities located on the border between North Korea and Manchuria. The Office of the Northeast Bureau in Korea closed in February 1949. In its place, the Chinese commercial and trade representative office (상업대표단) opened in March 1949 and it closed in August 1950 when the official Chinese embassy in Pyongyang opened. The KVA officer, Park Il Woo, who was the Director of Home Affairs at the People’s Committee and later the Secretary for Home Affairs, worked with Chinese communists primarily via those offices.⁴⁰¹

The unofficial route for communication between Chinese communists and the North Korean government was through personal relations between Kim Il Sung and Zhou Baozhong,

⁴⁰⁰ Charles Kraus, “Mutual Dependence in Sino-North Korean Relations: Evidence from the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War.”, SAIS Asia Conference, Washington D.C. (April 6, 2012): 6-7.

⁴⁰¹ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 2),” 239-241.

who was a long time Chinese boss and a mentor of Kim Il Sung.⁴⁰² The CCP and Zhou Baozhong sent Zhou's wife, Wang Il Ji, to Kim Il Sung and she unofficially visited Kim Il Sung many times. The objective of her first visit was to ask cooperation of the North Korean government to allow the entrance of the PLA 184th division, about 3,000 men, on their North Korea as a retreat route in 1946.⁴⁰³ The 184th division in southern Manchuria defected from the Chinese nationalists to the PLA and needed sanctuary inside North Korea. Because of the North Korean government's cooperation, this division crossed the Duman River and entered North Korea. Her second visit to Kim Il Sung was to ask the North Korean government to provide a rear area for the PLA inside of its territory. The PLA needed a safe zone for the families of PLA soldiers, wounded soldiers, and reserve logistical supplies. Her third visit was to ask conveyance of supplies and logistics inside North Korean territory. Her fourth visit was to ask for shoes for PLA soldiers. Kim Il Sung immediately provided as many shoes as he could. Kim ordered that production of shoes for domestic Korean consumption cease, in order to redirect production for the PLA.⁴⁰⁴ Many members of the CCP and the PLA played very important roles between China and North Korea with their personal relations with figures of the North Korean government at that time.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² Zhou Baozhong was born in central Yunnan; he studied Marxist thought in Moscow and joined the anti-Japanese resistance. Zhou fled to the Soviet Far East in 1940 and worked with Kim Il Sung in the 88th Special Brigade as a commander-in-chief until August 1945. See Kraus, "Mutual Dependence in Sino-North Korean Relations," 4.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, 5.

⁴⁰⁴ 이종석, "국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 2)," 242-243.; Kraus, "Mutual Dependence in Sino-North Korean Relations", 5.

⁴⁰⁵ Kraus explains many Chinese figures of the CCP, including Kao Kang and Chen Yun, strengthened a tie between the CCP and the North Korean government with their personal relationship. From Kraus, "Mutual Dependence in Sino-North Korean Relations," 6-12.

The friendship between leaders were particularly helpful in facilitating cooperation between the CCP and the North Korean government. At a micro level, large numbers of ordinary Chinese and Koreans also had similarly amicable relations with each other. Large numbers of ethnic Koreans, who had lived in China before the creation of the PRC and who had come back to Korea, had a longstanding friendships with many Chinese people, especially Chinese communists, at a personal level. In particular, relations between Korean veterans of the PLA or guerilla forces and the soldiers of the PLA were strong because they lived together, worked together, camped together and fought together, against the Japanese Army and the Nationalist Army.

Interestingly, overseas Chinese in North Korea from 1945 to 1950 also contributed to the amity between the two peoples. Chinese residents in North Korea in this period carried out land reform with North Koreans, opened Chinese language schools and circulated information among Chinese nationals about the situation of China and Korea. Overseas Chinese in North Korea strengthened people-to-people and country-to-country relations through their political, economic, and cultural activities.⁴⁰⁶ Using evidence from the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives, Cathcart and Kraus documented diverse and massive exchange between the two countries. For instance, 50 selected North Korean students and members of the party, government, and military, studied English in China during the Korean War.⁴⁰⁷ Relation among large numbers of ordinary people at the grassroots level explains a durability of the relationship between China and North Korea.

⁴⁰⁶ Charles Krauss, "Bridging East Asia's Revolutions: The Overseas Chinese in North Korea, 1945-1950." *The Journal of Northeast Asian History* 11, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 40-41.

⁴⁰⁷ Adam Cathcart and Charles Kraus, "The Bonds of Brotherhood: New Evidence on Sino-North Korean Exchanges, 1950-1954." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 13, no. 3 (Summer, 2011): 41.

Clearly, this amity between China and North Korea was very different from the relations between the Soviet Union and North Korea. To North Korea, Chinese friends were the same as hometown friends while the figures of the Soviet Union were similar to business partners. The relationship between the Soviet Union and North Korea was based on mutual interests while the relationship between China and North Korea was based on personal friendships and cultural affinities. Therefore, the amity between the Soviet Union and North Korea was weak and unstable because it was not rooted in cultural understanding and shared experience. If there were no mutual interest, the relationship would more easily break. Kim Il Sung admired only two figures of the Soviet Union, Stalin and Shtykov. Therefore, when Stalin died in 1953 and Stykov (the first ambassador in Pyongyang) returned to the Soviet Union in 1950, there was no Soviet figure to maintain the personal contact with Kim Il Sung. This explains why relations between North Korea and the Soviet Union chilled after Stalin died and the Korean War ended, while the relationship between China and North Korea remained strong, at least for a time.

The Returned Warriors from China and Their Failed Dream

The KPA had two primary types of commanders and staffs at the regiment, division, corps and the headquarters level. The first type were people of Kim Il Sung's group. They fought against the Japanese Army as the CCP members in Manchuria during the 1930s. They escaped to the Soviet Union and became the members of the Soviet special 88th brigade. The second type were veterans of the KVA who spent their time in China for more than a decade. Veterans of the KVA were much numerous than Kim Il Sung's group. Kim Il Sung's group numbered around 80 men, but veterans of the KVA more than 50,000. Historians differ in their estimates of numbers

of soldiers who returned from China, from 50,000 to 69,200.⁴⁰⁸ Veterans of the KVA held 95.5% of political commissars (cultural affair officers of the KPA) posts (422 men) while people of Kim Il Sung's group held only 1.1 % (5 men).⁴⁰⁹ About 50% of the KPA generals in July 1951 were veterans of the Chinese Civil War.⁴¹⁰ However, despite their small numbers, Kim Il Sung's group dominated top positions of the KPA, such as the Defense Minister, the Front Field Commander and the Chief of the General Staff. Although Kim Il Sung's group members were educated and trained with Soviet military units for four years, their military experiences lay mostly in small guerilla attacks and battles.

Historians differ also in their opinions of the military capabilities of these returned soldiers from China. Yum In Ho argues that they were not strong, seconding Mao's observation that ethnic Korean soldiers were not conventional forces and had military weaknesses.⁴¹¹ Jang Sung Jin argues that historians have overestimated the quality of the soldiers from China, because the KPA 6th division, which consisted of these soldiers from China, frequently failed its mission due to time constraints.⁴¹² Jang further argues that another division, the 12th division, lost the battle of Hongchun and failed its offensive towards Andong during the war.⁴¹³ Jang points out that the KVA units in China had only a company-level education and their missions in

⁴⁰⁸장성진, "6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰," 158. ; 데이빗 쉰이, *중국의 6.25 전쟁 참전* (Seoul: 다와, 2011), 41. ; 김중생, *조선의용군의 밀입북과 6.25 전쟁* (Seoul, 명지출판사, 2000), 159. ; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 399.

⁴⁰⁹ 박명림, *한국 전쟁의 발발과 기원* 2, 703. ; NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Item 9/120, 극비 (문화간부성원 통계표).

⁴¹⁰장성진, "6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰," 158. ; 김중생, *조선의용군의 밀입북과 6.25 전쟁*, 241.

⁴¹¹염인호, *조선의용군의 독립운동* (Seoul: 나남, 2001), 483.

⁴¹²장성진, "6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰," 173-174.

⁴¹³ *Ibid*, 176.

the Chinese Civil War were largely irregular wars.⁴¹⁴ However, Jang Jun Ik estimates that military capability of the soldiers from China was 1.5 rating (a personal rating by the author), compared to his rating of ordinary soldiers of the KPA who were not from China, 1.0.⁴¹⁵ Yum In Ho and Jang Sung Jin do not look at all of the characteristics of the Chinese Civil War campaign. Jang Sung Jin only focuses on a short combat history and the achievements of each division from China on assessment that war largely based on Mao's short comments about their military capability.⁴¹⁶ However, Jang Sung Jin also does not consider the entire campaign of the war and how this campaign directly and indirectly developed these soldiers.

The Chinese Civil War included aspects of regular and irregular warfare. As the soldiers went from irregular to regular warfare, the scale of war zones, the number of soldiers and weapons of war were greatly expanded. Although the Chinese Civil War has the image of irregular warfare but, particularly in, the later period of war, it was marked by the conventional warfare. For instance, the Huai Hai campaign was a significant, major, regular battle, in which massed soldiers, weapons and equipment were used. Huai Hai was the largest and most decisive campaign, lasting from 6 November 1948 to 10 January 1949, and it included more than one million combatants and large scale mobile operations. It represents the final stage of revolutionary war. Chinese military historian Gary J Bjorge points out that the Huai Hai campaign ranks as one of the major campaigns in world military history because of its magnitude, duration and strategic impact.⁴¹⁷ The Symyang, Jangchu and Sabolim river battles

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid*, 177-179.

⁴¹⁵ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 464.

⁴¹⁶ 장성진, "6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰," 177-179.

⁴¹⁷ Gary J. Bjorge, *Leavenworth paper number 22: Moving the Enemy: Operational Art in the Chinese PLA's Huai Hai Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 1-2.

were large conventional wars in which 700,000 PLA soldiers (PLA 53 divisions), including the KVA, participated and 100,000 Nationalist soldiers died.⁴¹⁸ For instance, Lee Bok Ryong, a former KVA, the PLA 156th Independent Division and later the KPA 6th Division soldier, remembers that ethnic Korean soldiers participated and died in many large scale battles and operations, such as the Jangchun and Yangtze River battle.⁴¹⁹ Kim Byong Wook, a former KVA and the PLA Independent 156th Division and later the KPA 12th Division soldier, remembers that his unit, the PLA Independent 156th Division, participated in many large scale conventional battles, such as the Jangchun, Namchang, and Banpung battles, and more than 1 million soldiers joined these battles.⁴²⁰ The PLA soldiers executed large-scale operations in this campaign. Soldiers who participated in this large scale operation directly and indirectly learned modern operations, including large scale maneuvers, fire support, logistics, command and control.

Even soldiers who units failed in their missions, and even soldiers whose missions did not involve combat, gained significant military experience. Soldiers can learn some military skills and techniques from the classrooms and training ground, but there they experience simulations and models, reflecting ideal condition. But military experience still matters; soldiers learn many things from experiences in war zones: terrain, weather, geography, logistics, supplies, signal, leadership, fighting spirit, emergency situation, command and control. For instance, the soldiers of the Red Army and the US Army learned valuable military experiences

⁴¹⁸염인호, “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로,” in *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 2* (서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2002), 158.; “특별연구 조선의용군,” *역사비평* 28 (August 1994), 200-205.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 249-257.

⁴¹⁹정현수, *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁*, 174-179.

⁴²⁰*Ibid.*, 139-141.

from both successes and failures of their missions throughout the Second World War. Soldiers who did not directly participate in the Normandy campaign or the Kursk battle learned the lessons of those battles. The PLA soldiers before the Chinese Civil War were totally different from the PLA soldiers after the Chinese Civil War.

The KVA soldiers closely watched how the PLA defeated the Nationalist Army in conventional warfare whether their missions were directly combat missions or not. Soldiers can learn some military skills and techniques from education and training in classrooms and the training fields. The veterans of the KVA had more valuable military experiences at tactical and operational levels than non-veterans of the KPA because these soldiers participated in regular warfare with the PLA from 1945 to 1949.

Kim Il Sung ignored the experiences of the KVA. Kim emphasized only military techniques and skills. He also checked the rise of their influence over the KPA. He believed that his group and new soldiers who were trained and educated in the Soviet Union or based on Soviet doctrine were more similar to an ideal type of regular forces than the veterans of the Chinese Civil War. Jang Jun Ik argues that Kim Il Sung considered the KVA soldiers as potential rivals and excluded them from important missions, such as occupying Seoul.⁴²¹

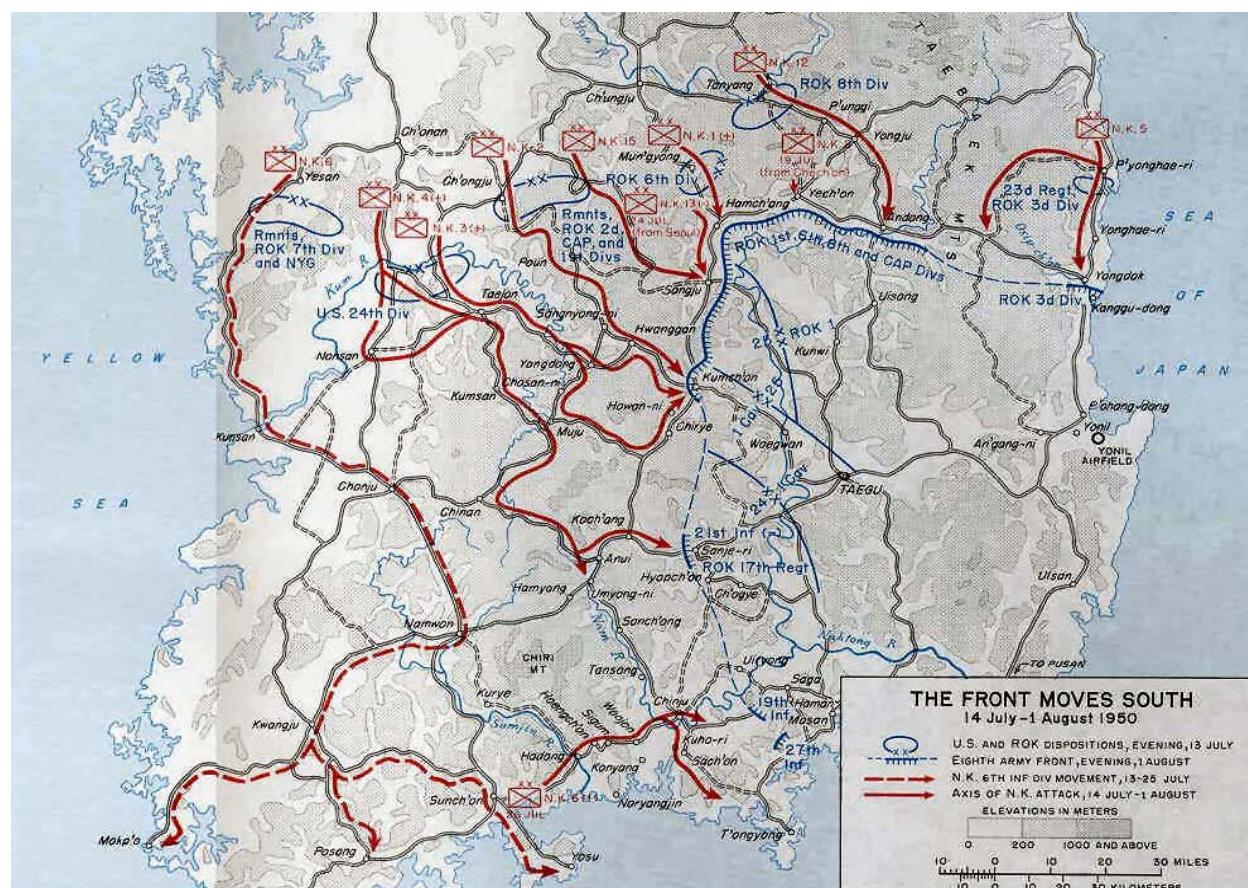
I argue that Kim Il Sung failed to use the maximum military capabilities of the KPA because of his political consideration - to exclude former KVA soldiers' units (the pro-Chinese faction) from important missions. I also argue that Kim Il Sung had a strong belief in the superiority of science and technology – a viewpoint like that of his model, the Soviet Army, (which ironically was regarded as inferior scientifically and technologically by the West). Kim Il

⁴²¹ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 466-468.

Sung believed the KVA and the Yeonan faction were political rivals and considered the rise of Chinese influence via them over North Korean domestic affairs. Because of this, Kim Il Sung failed to use the military capability of three divisions, who had military experiences in China. He deployed them as support attack units, not main attack units in the offensive toward Seoul. Divisions where Kim Il Sung assigned the main attack missions against Seoul and Chunchun to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th infantry divisions and 105th tank brigade where very few soldiers had military experiences, while he used the 5th, 6th and 7th (later 12th) infantry divisions, which contained many veterans of the Chinese Civil War only as support attack units directed to Ongjun, Kaesung, Hongchun and Kangreung.⁴²² Therefore, Jang points out that only Kim Il Sung's division received medals and prizes for their successful missions to occupy Seoul, including 3rd, 4th Division and the 105th tank brigade.⁴²³ Kim Il Sung ignored the wealth of experience of the returned veterans of the Chinese Civil War.

⁴²²*Ibid*, 464-465.

⁴²³*Ibid*, 468. ; See “부대칭호 수여에 관하여 (July 5, 1950)”, in *북한연구자료집*, ed. 김준엽 (Seoul: 고려대 아세아문제연구소, 1974), 2.



Map 1: The Front Moves South between 14 July and 1 August 1950 during the Korean War⁴²⁴

During the war, Kim Il Sung made these significant because of his stereotype of the returned soldiers and his political considerations. Kim Il Sung assigned the mission to the 6th division, the strongest unit from China, to advance the direction towards Jolla Province (Westward), not the main direction towards Pusan.⁴²⁵ This map shows that the movement of the KPA 6th Division between 13 and 25 July, the crucial time to advance towards Pusan in order to stop the defensive build up by the US and the ROK armies. This did not make sense militarily because the KPA needed to advance towards Pusan with their maximum speed to secure the port city before the arrival of the additional US forces and the construction of a prepared defense line

⁴²⁴ Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: June-November 1950*, Map V.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid*, 466-467.

along the Nakdong River. There were no enemies in Jolla Province, making the redirection of troops in a wide circle unnecessary – particularly the KPA's strongest division. The Soviet style tactics and operation certainly did not advise such a movement. Although the 6th division advanced towards Pusan as soon as possible after the large turning movement, it was too late when they arrived at the Pusan perimeter. US forces had already arrived and established a strong defensive line. When the KPA a conference at Byulori on 4 of December, 1950, to analyze why the KPA lost the war, Kim Il Sung strongly criticized and purged pro-Chinese commanders who were KVA soldiers.⁴²⁶

Why did Kim Il Sung fear and ignore these experienced soldiers? During the 1990s and 2000s, many Korean researchers started to focus on the history of the former KVA soldiers, because they could use Chinese sources and visit and interview former KVA soldiers or their families and friends who survived in China, especially Manchuria. Kim Joong Seng, Jang Joon Ik, Lee Chong Seok, Yum In Ho and Jeong Byong Il produced valuable research on that topic. These scholars who studied the Korean soldiers who returned from China agree that these soldiers were experienced, and passionate nationalists, but not strongly ideological communists.⁴²⁷ Jeong Byong Il claims that the role of Yeon-An faction was critical for Sino-

⁴²⁶ *Ibid*, 468.

⁴²⁷ 김중생, *조선의용군의 밀입북과 6.25 전쟁*, 273.; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 250.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 1 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 1),” *전략연구* 11, (November 1997): 278.; 염인호, *한국전쟁: 만주 조선인의 조국과 전쟁* (Seoul: 역사비평사, 2010); *조선의용군의 독립운동* (서울: 나남출판, 2001); “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로.” in *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 2* (서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2002), 133-190.; *조선의용대와 조선의용군* (서울: 한국 독립운동사 편찬위원회 독립기념관 한국독립운동사연구소, 2009); “특별연구 조선의용군.” *역사비평* 28 (August 1994), 170-210.; “[특집] 조선의용대의 창설과 한·중 연대.” *한국근현대사연구* 11, (November, 1999): 136-167.

North Korean cooperation because Kim Il Sung's group did not have a direct connection with Mao's government. Kim's group mainly worked with the CCP in Manchuria during the 1930's and this was a time before Mao became a major power of the CCP in the 1940's.⁴²⁸ Therefore, people of the Yeon-An faction and the KVA, such as Park Il Woo, who mainly worked with the PLA and the CCP during the 1940's, had a close connection with figures in Mao's government.

At the eve of the war, more than half of the KPA soldiers had military experiences in China while the ROK Army did not have many soldiers with diverse military experiences. Among the KPA soldiers, ten out of twenty one regiments (47%) were veterans from China in summer 1949 and early 1950, and they came back to Korea only some months before the war started.⁴²⁹ They continued to fight, think, and behave as before, when they were in the PLA fighting against the Nationalist Army for more than four years in China.

A total of three divisions and one regiment of ethnic Koreans returned from China: two divisions arrived in July 1949 and one division and one regiment arrived in April 1950.⁴³⁰ These units became the KPA 5th, 6th and 12th divisions and the 18th regiment of 4th division. The KVA originated from the Korean Volunteers Corps (KVC). Kim Won Bong organized the KVC on October 10 1938, as a unit of 100 to 105 men; Kim Won Bong became its first commander.⁴³¹

⁴²⁸ 정병일, “북한국가건설에 미친 연안파의 역할.” *한국정치학회보* 46(5) (December 2012): 164-165. ; “북·중 관계에 미친 연안파의 위상 재조명: 정치·군사적 평가를 중심으로,” *사회과학연구* 18 (2), (August 2010): 305.

⁴²⁹ 염인호, “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로,” 133.

⁴³⁰ 장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰,” 164-166.; 염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 170.

⁴³¹ 염인호, “[특집] 조선의용대의 창설과 한·중 연대,” 136. ; Yum In Ho estimates the number of the KVC as 100 men in October 1938 and later 155 men in October 1939 while Jang Jun I

The KVC was the first ethnic Korean military unit and fought against the Japanese Army with the Chinese forces. The objective of the KVC was to fight against the Japanese Army and to liberate the homeland, Korea, from Japan.⁴³² The KVC mainly conducted political, informational and propaganda missions, not direct combat missions.⁴³³

After the rise and the fall of the KVC against the Japanese Army, Mu Jung created the KVA on 10 July 1942.⁴³⁴ The KVA in 1942 numbered about 150-200 men.⁴³⁵ The KVA members were mostly young students – 116, and thus about 80% of the total.⁴³⁶ Sixteen men were former translators for the Japanese Army.⁴³⁷ In December 1943, the KVA totaled 175 men; and a half of men were new members while another half of men were former members of the KVC.⁴³⁸ The first commander of the KVA was Mu Jung and the deputy commander was Park Hyo Sam. The political commissar was Park Il Woo.⁴³⁹ The KVA was divided into three units, the 1st, the 3rd and the 5th. The leadership of the first unit consisted of Commander: Wang Sin Ho (later changed name Kim Woong), Political Commissar: Bang Ho San, Chief of Staff: An Bin; the 3rd Unit – Commander: Kim Taek Myoung (later changed name Lee Sang Jo), Political Commissar: Ju Deok Hae, Deputy Commander: Kim Chang Deok (later changed name Lee Deok San), Chief of Staff: Kim Yeon; and the 5th Unit: Commander - Lee Ik Seong, Political

k points out the number of the KVC around 150 men. 염인호, *조선의용대와 조선의용군*, 175; *조선의용군의 독립운동*, 142.

⁴³²염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 174.

⁴³³장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰,” 167.

⁴³⁴장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 410-411.

⁴³⁵염인호, *조선의용대와 조선의용군*, 181.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid*, 178-179.; 염인호, *조선의용군의 독립운동*, 145-146.

⁴³⁷염인호, *조선의용대와 조선의용군*, 181. ; *조선의용군의 독립운동*, 146-148.

⁴³⁸*Ibid*, 144-149.

⁴³⁹장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 412.

Commissar: Park Hun Il, Chief of Staff: Jo Ryul Kwang.⁴⁴⁰ The KVA soldiers fought against the Japanese Army until the Japanese surrendered in August 1945.

After liberation of Korea in 1945, the numbers of the KVA increased to 1,500 men in September 1945 and to 2,000 men in November 1945.⁴⁴¹ The 1st Unit was located in Southern Manchuria, the 3rd Unit was located in Northern Manchuria and the 5th Unit was located in Eastern Manchuria.⁴⁴² Among commanders and staffs, Mu Chong, Park Hyosam and Choi Chang Ik came to North Korea. These units continually worked with the CCP and their mission was to fight against the Nationalist Army with the PLA in Manchuria.⁴⁴³

The KVA 1st Unit was 1,600 men in November 1945 and the numbers increased to 5,000 men in February 1946, 8,000 men in late 1947 and 12,000 men in spring 1949. Interestingly, the KVA recruited Koreans in Pyongan Northern Province inside of North Korea, not just in Manchuria.⁴⁴⁴ This unit was finally incorporated into the PLA and its name was changed to Lee Hong Kwang Unit.⁴⁴⁵ Because some members of the unit, including the commander Wang Sin Ho, came back to North Korea, Wang Ja In (later changed name Choi In), became the commander of the Lee Hong Kwang Unit.⁴⁴⁶ This unit fought in several battles and won several against the Nationalist Army, mainly in Southern Manchuria, including the Kumchun battle,

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 426-427.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),”250.

⁴⁴¹ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 424.

⁴⁴² *Ibid*, 426.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid*, 423.

⁴⁴⁴ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),”250. ; 오군, *승리의 개선가를 울리던 그날 리홍광지대* (심양: 료녕민족출판사, 1986), 250.

⁴⁴⁵ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 428-429.

⁴⁴⁶ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),”251.

during 1946 and 1947.⁴⁴⁷ The name of this unit was changed to the PLA Independent 4th Division in early December 1946. Wang Sin Ho became the division commander of the PLA Independent 4th Division⁴⁴⁸. Its political commissar was Pang Ho San, later the commander of the KPA 6th Division.⁴⁴⁹ This Division participated in many battles against the Nationalist Army in southern Manchuria. In November 1948, the PLA Independent 4th Division changed its name as the PLA 166th Infantry Division right after the big victory of the Simyang battle. This division became the KPA 6th Division when they came back to North Korea in July 1949.⁴⁵⁰ Most soldiers of the PLA 166th Division were the former KVA soldiers from early 1940. Its first commander, Wang Sin Ho, came back to North Korea in 1946, became the first commander of the KPA 1st Division when the KPA was created in 1948 and became the Corp Commander of the KPA 1st Corp when the Korean War started in June 1950.⁴⁵¹

Jang Jun Ik estimates the military capability of the KPA 6th division as one of the best divisions of the KPA in terms of experience, organization, exercise and a quality of officers. However, Jang Sung Jin argues that the estimate of the KPA 6th Division was overstated because the main mission of the KPA 6th Division was not regular warfare but irregular warfare, such as propaganda, mobilization and guerilla warfare.⁴⁵² I argue that the KPA 6th Division was much stronger and more experienced because these soldiers participated in large scale battles, such as

⁴⁴⁷ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 428-429.; 염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 203-204.

⁴⁴⁸ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 251.

⁴⁴⁹ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 431.

⁴⁵⁰ 이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 173.

⁴⁵¹ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 434-435.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 251.

⁴⁵² 장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰,” 173.

the Simyang battle, against the Nationalist Army and directly or indirectly learned diverse military experience from the Chinese Civil War in Manchuria area for more than five years. In addition to this experience in the field, many of these soldiers were also educated in official training sites.⁴⁵³ Mun Jung Il, a former KVC and KVA soldier, remembers that more than 80% of the KVC (later KVA) soldiers were educated in official military academies and schools in China.⁴⁵⁴ It is difficult to argue that their training, education and military experiences as soldiers were less significant than young soldiers, who were trained by Soviet-Koreans or Soviet advisors in North Korea or the Soviet Union and had no military experiences.

The first commander of the KPA was Pang Ho San and the headquarters of the division was located in Sinuju. The soldiers of this division were trained based on Soviet doctrine and field manual. It had three infantry regiments (13th, 14th and 15th regiment), one field artillery regiment (the 6th field artillery regiment) and about 11,000 men. The KPA moved near the 38th parallel at the eve of the Korean War and its mission was an advance towards Ongjin peninsula and Kaesung, in the far westward direction.⁴⁵⁵

The KVA 3rd Unit started with only 19 men and 300 ethnic Korean men in Harbin joined them. It operated mainly in northern Manchuria. The members of this unit increased to 1,000 men in November 1945 because of participations of many young passionate Korean men.⁴⁵⁶ This unit joined the battle in Harbin with the PLA from April 1946 and its number increased to 3,000

⁴⁵³ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 434-434.

⁴⁵⁴ 문정일, “증언 중국전선에서 싸운 조선의용군의 항일전쟁,” *역사비평* 12 (August, 1990): 375.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 455-456.; 염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 208.; 이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 178.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 435-436.

men.⁴⁵⁷ This unit became the PLA Independent 8th Unit (a regiment size) in June 1946 and later became the 2nd Unit of the PLA Independent 11th Division in June 1948.⁴⁵⁸ The 1st and 3rd units of this 11th Division were also ethnic Korean soldiers. The commander, political commissar, chief of staff and two regiment commanders of the PLA Independent 11th Division were Chinese soldiers. Koreans held positions of a deputy commander, deputy regiment commander and a deputy political commissar although more than 90% of soldiers of this division were ethnic Koreans.⁴⁵⁹ This PLA Independent 11th Division joined the battle of Jangchun in October 1948. In this battle, 6,000 Nationalist soldiers died and 2,100 PLA soldiers died.⁴⁶⁰ This division became the PLA 164th Infantry Division in March 1949. The 2nd Unit of the PLA Independent 11th Division became the 491st Regiment of the PLA 164th Infantry Division.⁴⁶¹ This 164th PLA division came back to North Korea in July 1949 and became the KPA 5th Division.

The KPA 5th Division had about 11,000 men and its first commander was Kim Chang Deok. This Division had three infantry regiments (10th, 11th, and 12nd regiments) and one field artillery regiment (5th regiment). This division arrived near the 38th parallel at the eve of the Korean War and its mission was an advance towards Yangyang, in the far eastward direction.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁷이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 253.

⁴⁵⁸장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 438-440.

⁴⁵⁹염인호, “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로,” 140-141.; 염인호, *또 하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁*, 440-442.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 146.

⁴⁶¹장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 441-442.; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 254.; 염인호, *또 하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁*, 435.

⁴⁶²장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 456-458.; 염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 208.; 이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 188-189.

The KPA 12th Division which came back to North Korea in March and April 1950.⁴⁶³ The numbers of the KPA 12th Division was around 15,000 men.⁴⁶⁴ This unit was not directly from the KVA 5th Unit. The KVA 5th Unit's main area of operations was eastern Manchuria but this unit was incorporated into the PLA in November 1945 without developing as an independent unit.⁴⁶⁵ However, the members of the KVA 5th Unit fought in several battles, including the battle of Jangchun, and gained diverse military experiences.⁴⁶⁶ The KPA 12th Division was the former PLA Independent 15th Division. The PLA Independent 15th Division were mostly from former soldiers of the PLA 156th Division and they were ethnic Koreans.⁴⁶⁷ The commander of the PLA Independent 15th Division was Jun Woo, later the commander of the KPA 12th Division and most soldiers of this unit had diverse military experiences in eastern Manchuria against the Nationalist Army. The KPA 12th Division had three infantry regiments (30th, 31st and 32nd regiment) and one field artillery regiment (12th field artillery regiment).⁴⁶⁸

The number of ethnic Korean soldiers in the PLA 47th Army equaled that of one regiment and one battalion. These soldiers came back to Songlim of Hwanghae Province of North Korea in April 1950 and became the 18th regiment of the KPA 4th Division.⁴⁶⁹ Jang Sung Jin estimates

⁴⁶³이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 173.

⁴⁶⁴장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 457.

⁴⁶⁵*Ibid*, 443. ; 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 254-255.

⁴⁶⁶염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 200-201. ; 장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰,” 175.

⁴⁶⁷염인호, “中國共內戰期の 滿洲朝鮮人部隊 에 관한 研究 (1948 ~ 1950) - 中國人民 解放軍 第 4 野戰 軍 獨立 15 師 團을 중심으로” *한국독립운동사연구* 22 (August 2004): 198.

⁴⁶⁸장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 458.

⁴⁶⁹이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 181. ; 장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰,” 176.

that the 18th regiment of the KPA 4th Division was the strongest unit among units of returned soldiers because the successful performance of this unit during the Korean War.⁴⁷⁰

Before the return of three divisions and one regiment from China in July/August 1949 and March/April 1950, numerous soldiers came back to North Korea between 1947 and 1948. In spring and summer 1946, Kim Woong, the commander of the KVA 1st Unit, Lee Sang Jo, the commander of the KVA 3rd Unit, Lee Ik Sung, Jeong Wi, Park Il Woo, commanders of the KVA 5th Unit and Park Hun Il, the commander of the KVA 7th Unit came back to North Korea. Among them, Lee Ik Sung and Park Il Woo brought two battalions and one field artillery regiment (about 1,000 men) in June/July 1946 when they came back to North Korea.⁴⁷¹ About 60 KVA soldiers came back to North Korea in July 1947 and about 1,500 KVA soldiers came back to North Korea in October 1947. About 1,000 KVA soldiers came back to North Korea in May 1949 and about 1,000 KVA soldiers came back to North Korea in December 1949. These 2,000 men became the 766th Unit. In August 1949, about 2,000 KVA soldiers came back to North Korea and became the 603rd Motor cycle unit.⁴⁷²

The KVA soldiers inside the PLA maintained a strong Korean national identity and a desire to return to their Korean homeland, as Yum In Ho argues.⁴⁷³ The KVA soldiers started their careers in the fight against the Japanese Army to liberate their homeland, Korea. They were

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 176-177.

⁴⁷¹ 염인호 “특별연구 조선의용군,” 207.

⁴⁷² 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 459-460. ; Jian, *China's Road To the Korean War*, 109-110.

⁴⁷³ 염인호, “中國國共內戰期の 滿洲朝鮮人 部隊 에 관한 研究 (1948-1950) - 中國 人民 解放 軍 第 4 野 戰軍 獨立 15 師 團 을 중심으로,” *한국독립운동사연구* 22 (August 2004): 198.

226. ; “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로,” 176. ; 또 하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁, 432. ; 조선의용군의 독립운동, 349.

basically strong nationalists just like any other Asian nationalist communist soldiers at that time. Although these soldiers learned the basics Marxist-Leninist ideology, their main concerns were strong nationalism and patriotism. For instance, Lee Bok Ryong, a former KVA, the PLA 156th Division and later the KPA 6th Division soldier recalled that he never heard about Marxism-Leninism ideology when he was in China as a KVA and a PLA soldier. Lee first learned about Marxism-Leninism when he came back to North Korea just before the Korean War.⁴⁷⁴ Kim Byong Wook, a former KVA, the PLA Independent 156th Division and later the KPA 12th Division soldier, remembered that the KVA soldiers raised a Korean national flag when they won a battle against the Nationalist Army because they thought that the war against the Nationalist Army was the war for their homeland, Korea.⁴⁷⁵ Mun Jung Il, a former KVC and KVA soldier, remembered that the objective of the KVC units was to fight against the Japanese Army and to liberate Korea.⁴⁷⁶ The KVA unit erected two giant pictures, Mao and Kim Il Sung, in downtown Tonghwa of China when they won the battle in February 1946.⁴⁷⁷ Because they experienced discrimination and segregation by their revolutionary allies, the Chinese people, in a daily life for a long time, their main concern was not an expansion of international revolution but a building of strong nation state. Yum In Ho points out that Jeon Woo, the deputy commander of the PLA Independent 6th Division, officially complained about a lack of Koreans in key positions of the PLA, such as commanders and staffs, and a segregation and discrimination towards

⁴⁷⁴ 정현수, *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁*, 182-185.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 139.

⁴⁷⁶ 문정일, “증언 중국전선에서 싸운 조선의용군의 항일전쟁,” 375.

⁴⁷⁷ 이종석, “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3),” 258. ; 오군, *승리의 개선가를 울리던 그날 리훙광시대* (심양: 료녕민족출판사, 1986), 212.

Koreans by Chinese people inside the army.⁴⁷⁸ In particular, ethnic soldiers of the PLA felt themselves as minority and were treated unequally in their career development. These soldiers expected not only to escape from discrimination and segregation but also to pursue better career development with their experiences when they come back to homeland, Korea.⁴⁷⁹ Lee Bok Ryong, a former Korean soldier of the PLA, remembers that ethnic Korean soldiers of the PLA had strong aspirations to come back to their homeland, Korea, in early 1950 when the Chinese Civil War had almost ended.⁴⁸⁰

How did the Soviet Union, North Korea and China see the return of these ethnic Korean soldiers of the PLA to North Korea in 1949 and 1950? Lee Jae Hoon argues that the Kremlin's consideration of the possible invasion of the ROK Army towards North Korea was significant regarding the return of these soldiers in July 1949.⁴⁸¹ In December 1948, the Soviet Army withdrew from North Korea, the Kremlin worried about the possibility of the ROK Army launching a preemptive strike against North Korea in April 1949.⁴⁸² Pyongyang welcomed their return because Kim Il Sung's group already dominated their key posts of the party, army and cabinet against potential rival, pro-Chinese soldiers in 1949. Beijing was agreeable because the PLA had almost won the war against the Nationalist Army. In 1950, Beijing started demobilization of the huge PLA because much more labor was needed to restore their economy

⁴⁷⁸염인호, “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로.” 176-177. ; 염인호, *또 하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁*, 253-257. ; “中國 國共內戰 期 의 滿洲 朝鮮 人 部隊 에 關한 研究 (1948-1950)-中國人民 解放軍 第 4 野 戰 軍獨立 15 師 團을 중심으로,” 211.

⁴⁷⁹*Ibid*, 217.

⁴⁸⁰정현수, *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁*, 179.

⁴⁸¹이재훈, “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장,” 174-175.

⁴⁸²*Ibid*, 176-178.

from the devastation of the civil war. Lee points out that Kim's invasion plan and Mao's plan to reduce the size of the PLA were significant factors regarding the return of ethnic Korean soldiers in March/April 1950.⁴⁸³

The return of these soldiers in 1949 and 1950 strengthened Kim Il Sung's confidence regarding his invasion plan. These soldiers were trained further in North Korea and participated in the Korean War. The influences over the KPA of soldiers who had returned from China were clearly enormous with their experiences. However, Kim Il Sung did not permit these returned soldiers to use their valuable experiences in the best way because he prioritized political considerations, concerning their loyalty. For more than a decade, the KVA soldiers had fought against the Japanese Army and the Nationalist Army to achieve their dream – building a strong nation state. However, their dream became a failed dream not because of Kim Il Sung's poor leadership.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid*, 188-189.

8. The Beginning of the War: Stalin's Strategic Objective

Considering the relative strength and combat readiness of the forces that faced each other across the 38th parallel in June 1950, it was a marvel that the North Korean armies were delayed at all in their drive to overrun all of South Korea....Nor did the ROKs have any gun capable of slowing a tank. It was as if few troops of Boy Scouts with hand weapons had undertaken to stop a Panzer unit.⁴⁸⁴

General Matthew B. Ridgway

In the early morning on June 25th, 1950, rain fell near the 38th parallel, which became a division line between North and South Korea. Mountains were soaked and a heavy fog had thickened. Southern areas of the 38th parallel were peaceful. Because of reduced alertness, many South Korean soldiers departed of their barracks and enjoyed their time in the downtown city, including the party in Yongsan, downtown Seoul. Young soldiers in a guard post were dozing off and dreamed a plan of visitors their girlfriends. On the other side, young soldiers of the North Korean People's Army (KPA) were ready and waiting for orders to start the war across the 38th parallel. The tensions were continuing in this area. Young artillerymen of the KPA held their breath while holding their artillery launcher behind the breech of their artillery guns. They remembered their harsh training and were ready to fire.⁴⁸⁵ Around 4 AM, the booming of canons resounded all along the 38th parallel and woke South Korean soldiers in guard post and barracks. Artillery bombardments signaled the start of the ground war. The Korean War had started.

⁴⁸⁴ Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, INC, 1967), 17.

⁴⁸⁵ Paik Son-yop, the first four star general of the ROK Army, remembers that many ROK Army officers, including the Army Chief of Staff and generals, joined the party in Yongsan, much drunken and came back to units around 2am, the beginning day of the Korean War. The KPA soldiers arrived near the 38th parallel, were ready for fire and waited for the order to fire. From 백선엽, “백선엽의 6·25 징비록-74: 술에 취했던 그날 새벽, 김일성 군대가 38 선을 넘어왔다,” accessed March 1, 2015, *Chosun Ilbo Premium Chosun*, July 11, 2014. http://premium.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/10/06/2014100602987.html (accessed March 1, 2015).

Throughout the night before the invasion, the ROK Army Headquarters Situation Room had sporadically received intelligence reports showing signs of an imminent enemy attack, including a 17th Regiment emergency telegram at 1 AM, 1st Division's report at 3 AM and 7th Division's report at 3:30 AM. The 17th Regiment's telegram said "An unknown number of KPA troops are approaching from the north of Kuksabong." and the 1st Division reported: "The enemy is moving a vessel from Towhari to the front. The vessel seems to be for river-crossing." The 7th Division reported "Tank noises can be heard in the vicinity of Manseggyo bridge north of Yangmunri." But it was too late. The following reports were about a frantic situation. "Enemy artillery shells are falling on the front of friendly defensive positions."⁴⁸⁶

The KPA started the invasion entirely in the whole area along the 38th parallel. From Ongjin peninsula in the west to East coast, 1,600 artillery guns opened to fire at the same time, and 250 T-34 tanks started to move the South. The KPA began to cross the 38th parallel coincidentally at Ongjin, Kaesung, Chunchun, and the East Coast. It was a surprise attack at dawn and the Republic of Korean Army (ROK) was in a panic.

The Korean peninsula has 85,270 square miles a similar size to the United Kingdom, and its length is 684 miles from continental Asia into the Pacific Ocean. The peninsula has rich mountain area. Mountains cover 70 percent of the area in the peninsula and its northern and eastern part has more mountainous areas with the highest mountains. Places along the 38th parallel have similar terrain. The Eastern part has more mountains than the western part. Seoul, the traditional capital of Korea, is located in the western and central parts just a few miles away

⁴⁸⁶ Korea Institute of Military History (KIMH), *The Korean War I* (Seoul: Korea Institute of Military History, 1997), 157.

from the 38th parallel.⁴⁸⁷ Because of its location and the terrain of Seoul, close to the 38th parallel and less mountains within the western part, it is an important and easy target to capture for the KPA. Adrian R. Lewis explains the geography, terrain and situation of Korea in 1950:

In 1950, Korea lacked the infrastructure of European nations. There were few large cities and little industry. Line of communications, rail and road were generally poor, and cross-country movement by vehicle, tracked and wheeled, was difficult. There was no space in Korea for the heavy armor and mechanized divisions that characterized the Second World War in Europe...Mobility in some parts of the country was restricted to foot movement. One main road and one main rail system linked the entire country. Korea has a spine of mountains running almost its entire length. The mountainous terrain was primarily in eastern parts of the country, and was excellent for defensive and infiltration tactics. The flat areas were covered with rice fields that channeled vehicular transportation. The terrain in most parts of Korea reduced engagement ranges, and diminished the technological advantages of US forces.⁴⁸⁸

The Korean War was a primarily infantry warfare. The KPA had geographical benefits because his two giant friends, China and Russia, stood behind North Korea. South Korea was the tip of iceberg, a non-communist blue area surrounded by the huge red colored North East Asian continent, which included communist countries.

The KPA moved along main three lines. The KPA 1st Corps conducted the main attack and moved along the Yonch'on-Unch'on-Uijongbu axis to capture Seoul with the avenue of approach leading from Kaesong to Munsan. The KPA 2nd Corps carried out a supporting attack and moved along toward Ch'unch'on and Kangnung, using the Hwach'on-Ch'unch'on axis. The Soviet T-34 tanks made the KPA successfully penetration of ROK defensive positions along the

⁴⁸⁷ The Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook," accessed March 1, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2125.html> (accessed March 1, 2015).

⁴⁸⁸ Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from the Second World War to Operating Enduring Freedom*, 2nd (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 89.

38th parallel and continued their movement the South. Because of the lack of antitank weapons, the ROK Army was powerless to stop them.⁴⁸⁹

The KPA contained a great many Koreans who had fled from the Japanese into Russia and had been trained under fire with the Russian and Chinese Red armies, plus several thousand who had completed a three year training period in the Soviet Union beginning in 1946. Divisions and other large units in the KPA were commanded largely by men who as junior officers had served with credit in the Soviet Army during the Second World War and each KPA division had assigned to it approximately fifteen Soviet Army advisers.⁴⁹⁰

The initial ground advance of the KPA met little resistance in most areas. The movement was 20 to 30 mph fast. Even though the KPA had some problems of the line of communication during the initial period of advancement, their attack looked like a German onslaught toward Russia early in the morning on 22nd of June, 1941, the start of Operation Barbarossa. Just like the Red Army was in a panic, ROK Army was in a panic.

ROKA expected that the KPA started the war near March or April. After March and April, ROKA issued an alert from 27th of April to 3rd of May against a possibility of uprising or invasion on Labor Day, the 1st of May. They did this again from 9th of May to 2nd of June for the General Election. ROKA issued an alert again from 11th to 23rd of June against a peace offensive of the North Korean government. ROKA reduced alert again on 23rd of June, 12PM, just 28 hours before the beginning of the war⁴⁹¹. Important military commanders had a party for opening ceremony of the Army Hall, including the Chief of the Army General Staff, and they enjoyed

⁴⁸⁹ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 156.

⁴⁹⁰ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 9-10.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid*, 153.

drinking throughout the night of 24th of June. Many young soldiers and officers departed their barracks and enjoyed their time in the downtown Seoul with their girlfriends. Because soldiers of the ROKA were exhausted from the two years struggle to overcome the guerrilla forces, who mainly were members of the South Korea Workers' Party (SKWP), including the Yeosu-Suncheon Rebellion in 1948 and partisan battles in Jirisan (Jiri mountain) after the Yeosu-Suncheon Rebellion as well as the continuous alerts, many were drunken and enjoying parties when the KPA attacked. In fact, many small battles near the 38th parallel and many guerilla battles in mountains in South Korea over the last two years from 1948 to 1950 made the ROKA become blunt in June 1950.

Therefore, the War did not start on June 25th, 1950. The Korean War actually started, not on June 25, 1950, but in early in 1948, with numerous insurgency battles fought in South Korea and along the 38th parallel. Before June 25, 1950, tens of thousands of people had died in South Korea through these insurgencies. Koreans of South Korea were also fighting other Koreans of South Korea, who supported DPRK and were communists.

Thus, Allan Millett redefines the Korean War as the three stages of the people's war from 1948 to 1953. Millett argues that the most appropriate way to understand the Korean War is to view it as a Maoist people's war. According to Millett, between August and September 1945 was the phase one of the war about the period of organization and political agitation. The phase two of the war began in April 1948 with the rebellion on Cheju-do province. At this time, about 1,800 men crossed from North to South to reinforce the guerrillas. The final phase of the conventional war was the war that the KPA crossed the 38 Parallel. According to Millett, the

phase two war cost 7,000 lives of the ROK security forces and the Korean civilian lives between 30,000 and 60,000.⁴⁹²

Bruce Cumings argues the starting point of the Korean War much earlier, from the 1930's: the anger and hatred between the two groups: the anti- Japanese Manchuria guerillas forces who became the KPA vs the Japanese forces in Manchuria who became the ROK Army. Cumings argues that the Korean War did not start on June 25th of 1950 because they fought each other in the 1930's. Cumings points out that this conflict in the 1930's was a huge factor in the coming of the conventional war because it was a kill or be killed situation.⁴⁹³

From many guerilla battles for two years before the conventional war in June 1950, the ROK Army had weakened insurgency movements within the southern areas of Korea, and consequently faced few uprisings behind the front lines. However, the energy the ROK Army expended on the effort against these guerillas left it less prepared to forestall the invasion from the north. Without the victory of the ROK Army in the insurgency warfare between 1948 and 1950, the ROK government could not have existed today by the conventional warfare of 1950. With the US help, this was the most important reason for the survival of the ROK government.

The most important assumption of Park Hun Young, the foreign minister of DPRK, regarding the Korean War that the KPA invasion force would gain significant help from guerrilla operating in the south, would be successful if ROK Army lost these insurgencies campaigns. The victories of these insurgencies from 1948 to 1950 before the conventional war were one of the important factors for a survival of the ROK government.

⁴⁹² Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-51: They came from the North* (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 2010), 11-12.

⁴⁹³ Cumings, *The Korean War*, 65-66.

Allan R. Millett explains that North Koreans as an ideologically-driven movement to impose a dictatorship by force and indistinguishable in intention from any other Asian Communist movement while South Koreans as a coalition of different political types, sharing only a blind devotion to the idea of a “new Korea.” Millett gives primacy to political ideology regarding these insurgencies and why Korea dissolved into civil war.⁴⁹⁴

However, the picture of these conflicts was complex. I argue that Koreans’ motivations to fight to lie in their recent historical experiences rather than political philosophy. The nationalist Koreans were not Western style liberalists or free-market supporters who were fans of Adam Smith or John Stuart Mill. Both nationalist and communist Koreans did not have their own tradition and experiences on ideological and philosophical debates, including Adam Smith’s neo classical economies, John Stuart Mill’s liberalism or utilitarianism, John Maynard Keynes’s Keynesian Economics or Antonio Gramsci’s Marxism. Small number of these people had a dream to build their own ideal society and country. Both had their own strong nationalism. Kim Il Sung’s group, the Yeonan faction and the former Korea Volunteer Army soldiers of North Korea identified themselves as nationalists. They fought against the Japanese Army and some of them fought against the Nationalist Army during the Chinese Civil War. Their hopes was to liberate their homeland, Korea, and to expel foreign threats, Japan. Syngman Rhee, Pak Hon-young and Kim Ku had same dreams until liberation in 1945. Therefore, their struggles of South and North and between South and North were not battles of different political philosophies but battles for political leadership. Therefore, just like other civil wars, their motivations largely originated from their own interest, experiences, emotion and memory rather than ideology.

⁴⁹⁴ Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 2.

Because they had hatred, resentment and rage toward each other, these insurgencies' battles and later the Korean War were very brutal and bloody. They killed opponents' families and extorted properties. Their emotion was deeply originated from their own experiences and memory sometimes from the colonial period and, of course, from the five years from 1945 to 1950. After the bloody insurgencies for two years, both survivors and their families had deeper rage and hatred for each other. During the two years guerrilla battles, antagonism between the two parties had deepened partly because of ideological differences but mostly because of political struggle and survival for their own interest.

Gregory Henderson, a former American diplomatic official in Seoul, explains features of Korean politics and society. Henderson explains that Korean political groupings are not rooted in political philosophies (or differing religious affiliations, or ethnic or linguistic differences), but rather in power networks – that is, relationships with persons vested in power. It would make the cause of the Korean War a battle between two powerful power elites and their clients.⁴⁹⁵ Ideology is a not sufficient framework to explain the cruel conflicts between the two parties in this homogeneous Korean society. The conflicts from 1945 to 1953 in Korean peninsula was not only an ideological conflict but also a political power struggle based on their relationship to power, such as Syngman Rhee, Kim Il Sung, Kim Ku, Yo Un-hyong, and Kim Kyu-sik. Kim Il Sung was not a Trotsky-like-Communist and Syngman Rhee was not a Jefferson-like-democrat. Today's Korean politics has a same picture. Two major parties have hardly differences in their political philosophies, except a diplomacy towards North Korea.

⁴⁹⁵ Gregory Henderson, *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968), 4-5.

South Korean readiness

A lack of alert of the ROK Army was good for the speed of the KPA movement. However, the unbalanced military capability and combat readiness between the two armies was a fundamental reason for the KPA's brilliant advancement. The KPA troops swept away everything in their path. Nothing could withstand their advance. The KPA occupied Seoul, a capital of South Korea, in three days. The ROK Army largely retreated, reorganized themselves and waited for the US forces' arrival. Beside the speed of the KPA advance, the greatest difficulty the ROK Army experienced was lack of detailed information about the current situation on frontline. The ROK Army was in a panic and Syngman Rhee escaped from Seoul and moved to Daejun. The reality was far worse than the ROK Army expected, resulting in a series of impossible orders to counterattack with units that had already ceased to exist. At this time, the ROK Army not only unprepared for war and overconfident but also continued to underestimate the strength of the KPA.

The story of the Army Chief of Staff of the ROK Army, Ch'ae Byong Dok, clearly show about how much the ROK Army unprepared for the war in general. Ch'ae Byong Dok was born in 1916, graduated from Japanese Military Academy in 1937. His branch was ordnance and he did not have experiences as a commander. When MacArthur met with Chae and asked to him about his plan in front of Syngman Rhee on June 28, 1950, Chae gave an evasive and ambiguous answer to MacArthur. MacArthur praised Chae in front of himself and Syngman Rhee, and asked a face-to-face meeting with Syngman Rhee at that night. MacArthur got angry at Chae's attitude and asked strongly a change of Chae to Syngman Rhee. Chae was released from the Chief of

Army Staff on 30 June. The night that the KPA cross the 38th parallel, Ch'ae Byong Dok⁴⁹⁶ had returned to his residence from the Officers' Club party around 2 AM, and was asleep when he received the shocking report from the ROKA Headquarters. After giving an oral directive to put the entire Army on alert effective 6 AM, he telephoned Defense Minister Shin Sung-mo, but could not establish connection. Riding in his jeep, General Ch'ae went to the Minister's residence in person, and reported the enemy invasion at 7 AM. Minister Shin expressed shock and dismay. He seemed to have expected an enemy invasion but he did not seem to have thought that it could come on a Sunday. In spite of the use of telephones, messengers, radio broadcasts and other means of communication, many soldiers return to post was delayed because many commanders and soldiers were enjoying their vacation or leave.⁴⁹⁷ 1st Division Commander Paek Son-yop remembers the situation when he received the report about the KPA. His staff for operation, Major Kim Duck Joon, telephoned him and he gasped, "The KPA started the war. Kaesung was in chaos and probably was occupied by the KPA now."⁴⁹⁸

South Korean Defense Minister Shin Sung-mo called an 'emergency meeting of active and reserved military leaders' at 10AM on 26 June, 1950. Defense Minister Shin and the Army Chief of Staff Chae explained that the situation would get better because the ROKA started to counterattack. Former 1st Division Commander retired Brigadier General Kim Sok-won

⁴⁹⁶ 조지프 C. 굴든, *한국전쟁: 알려지지 않은 이야기* (Seoul, 일월서각, 1982), 112.

⁴⁹⁷ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 158.

⁴⁹⁸ 백선엽, *Memoir: The Korean War* (Seoul: 시대정신, 1989), 32. ; Paek Son-yop was born in 1920 and was commissioned second lieutenant of the Japanese Imperial Army on April 1943. He fought against the Anti-Japanese guerilla forces, including Chinese and Koreans, as the Japanese army officer in Manchuria until the end of the Second World War, and he was a first lieutenant on August, 1945. He was one of the key commanders for the victory of insurgency battles in South Korea from 1948 to 1950. He became the 1st Division commander of the ROKA on April, 1950, a Chief of Army Staff on July, 1953, and the first four star general of the ROKA on January, 1953. His 1st Division of ROKA was the first unit to enter Pyongyang.

remembered that Defense Minister Shin had an optimistic view to the situation because he received the report which 300 soldiers of the KPA were captured in East Coast and the 17th Regiment started to counterattack against Haeju. The Chief of Army Staff Ch'ae agreed with Shin and argued that they will counterattack and advance to North from now. They had two voices regarding a defense of Seoul on this meeting. A commander of Seoul guard command, Colonel Lee Jongchan⁴⁹⁹ argued that Seoul has to be defended, but retired military commanders argued that the Army needs to move and has to build a defense line along Han River rather than a defense of Seoul. General Ch'ae agreed with Colonel Lee's opinion. Defense Minister Shin continually argued that the ROKA has to start the counterattack and move toward the North because this attack of the KPA would be a small reconnaissance or scouting. After the meeting, at the emergency meeting of Cabinet Council around 11 AM, Defense Minister Shin and General Chae briefed the situation, and argued that the ROKA could occupy in Pyongyang in three or five days. At this meeting, even General Chae explained that this attack seems to be too of a small guerilla battle to rescue two prisoned guerilla leaders Lee Juha and Kim Sam-yong in South Korea. At that night, Defense Minister Shin started considering a government to move to Suwon from Seoul, but General Chae continually argued that the ROKA will occupy Baekdu Mountain near Yalu River soon after a defending Seoul. At a meeting of military leaders at the Department of Defense in Seoul at 9 AM on June 27, Defense Minister Shin called a whiskey to his aid, Lieutenant Colonel Shin Dongwoo, and gave a cup of whiskey to all attendees. He and General Chae announced that Korean people now know defending Seoul will be without

⁴⁹⁹ Lee Jongchan was born in 1916 and graduated from Japanese Military Academy in 1937. He was a Japanese mid-level field commander during the Second World War and became the ROKA as Colonel in 1949. He was the Commander of Seoul Guard Command when the KPA started the war. He became the Chief of Army Staff in 1951 and Defense Minister of the Park Junghee government.

America's help, but Korean people decided to defend Seoul and move a government to the South.⁵⁰⁰

William Stueck explains why the ROK Army failed in that way at the initial period of war. Stueck points out that unbalanced military capabilities between the two Koreas on June 1950. He argues the KPA benefitted from not only a tactical surprise but also outgunned and outmanned over their opponents.⁵⁰¹ However, Steuck's explanation is still not enough. Outgun and outnumber are too simple explanations. War is not simple. War is both art and science. Steuck's view is very limited and simple because his assessment is only based on numbers of soldier and weapons and tactical surprise. Tactical surprise and outman/gun matter. Nonetheless, war is more complex. I argue that institutional surprise was the most significant reason for the ROK Army's failure at the initial period war. In the military context, the institutional surprise was more significant framework to explain the ROK Army's failure than a tactical surprise. The following tables are appointed dates of the ROK Army commanders and military training of units.

⁵⁰⁰ Korea Institute for Military History (KIMH), *6.25 전쟁사 2: 북한의 전면남침과 초기 방어전투* (Seoul: KIMHC, 2005), 67-70, 97.

⁵⁰¹ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), 11.

Position	Rank	Name	Age	Appointed Date	Period
Commander of Seoul Guard Command	Colonel	Lee Jongchan	34	1950. 6. 15	10 days
1 st Division Commander	Colonel	Paik Sunyub	30	1950. 4. 22	2 months
2 nd Division Commander	Bri.General	LeeHyungkun	30	1950. 6. 10	15 days
3 rd Division Commander	Colonel	Yu Seungchul	59	1950. 3. 10	3 months
5 th Division Commander	Maj.General	Lee Ungjun	60	1950. 4. 22	2 months
6 th Division Commander	Colonel	Kim Jongoh	29	1950. 6. 10	15 days
7 th Division Commander	Bri.General	Yu Jaeheung	29	1950. 6. 7	18 days
8 th Division Commander	Colonel	Lee Sungga	28	1950. 6. 23	2 days
17 th RegimentCommander	Colonel	Paik Inyub	27	1948. 11.20	19months

Table 19: Military Commanders of ROKA, June 25 1950⁵⁰²

Command Post Exercise (CPX) (Battalions)		Maneuver Exercise	Anti-tank Attack Exercise	Battalion Tactical Exercise	Company Tactical Exercise	Platoon Exercise	No Platoon Exercise
Regiment	Battalion						
5	17	14	6	16	30	3	17

Table 20: Military Training of the ROKA, June 25 1950⁵⁰³

Military Commanders of ROKA had little experiences to lead their units in combat. For instance, commanders of 2nd. Division, 6th Division, 7th Division, 8th Division, and the Seoul Guard Command came to their unit less than one month before the attack.⁵⁰⁴ Only 24% of battalions, 16 of 66, conducted battalion tactical exercise. 17 of 66 battalions did not finish their

⁵⁰² KIMH, 6.25 전쟁사 1, 684.

⁵⁰³ Ibid, 682.

⁵⁰⁴ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史 (Seoul: 瑞文堂, 1991), 220-221.

platoon exercise and the headquarters of the ROKA ordered that all units must finish their battalion tactical exercise by July and regiment tactical exercise by October of 1950. However, the war started before this. Institutional surprise was one of the most important reasons for the ROKA's failure at the initial period of the war. It was more important than a tactical surprise for their failure.

The ROKA lacked not only equipment but also trained leaders in modern warfare. There were no returnees from Manchuria in the ROKA and their main mission was internal security tasks over the several years except some counter guerrilla battles. Ridgway points out that many ROKA officers had been appointed for political reasons, as had been so many of the officers in our own peacetime National Guard in pre-World War 1 days, and so their military competence had never been examined. Furthermore, "Face" was of top importance in the ROKA, and Korean officers found it difficult to accept advice from junior American advisers, and often expressed open resentment at views contrary to their own, so that their own staffs hesitated to disagree with them.⁵⁰⁵

A lack of information and their overestimation on military strength showed a serious misreading and an optimistic view of military leaders of South Korea. Defense Minister Shin was not helpful national security advisor to President and did not have professional expertise about a military affair. Shin Sung-mo was born in 1891 and studied in China and England. He went to Vladivostok of Russia and started an independent movement against Japanese Empire in 1910. He became the 2nd Defense Minister of the Syngman Rhee government in 1949 and spoke English well. He had a speech that the ROKA can occupy Pyongyang or Wonsan of North Korea

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 11.

in one day if we get the order from President Rhee on 17 July, 1949. On September of 1949, he argued that the ROKA is ready for war and has been waiting the time for a war. However, he had no idea and plan when the KPA started the war.⁵⁰⁶ There was neither risk management plan on the government level, nor a basic security policy concept, and a process for national emergency situation, including a refugee and a mobilization plan. Without a conclusion, cabinet members and military leaders met again and again after the beginning of the war. They had unrealistic and optimistic views and did not have professional knowledge to understand realities on the front line. Most elites of cabinet and military were in chaotic and panic right after the war. President Rhee was not a strategic and military thinker. He understood the international situation well as he was a western educated student from Princeton, Harvard and George Washington University, but he did not understand war. Knowledge and passion did not guarantee him to be a well-prepared for war and a strategic leadership.

Syngman Rhee's patriotism and nationalism were strong. However, a moral of his leadership had largely suffered from massive reactions from both right and left wings' critiques because of issues of pro-Japanese collaborationists and land reform. At that time, a part of the problem within the South Korean government was a collaboration between Western-trained Koreans, who opposed Japan and its allies in the Second World War, and Japanese trained Koreans, who served alongside the Japanese and aided in the Japanese administration of Korea. For instance, eighty percent of police officers for Rhee government were former Japanese colonial police officers, who suppressed an independent movement of Koreans and conducted forceful conscription of Koreans for the American Japanese War. The Chief of the Korean

⁵⁰⁶강준만, *한국현대사산책: 1950년대편 1 권* (Seoul: 인물과 사상사, 2004), 204.

National Police (KNP) Ch'oe Nung-jun called the KNP “the refugee home for Japanese-trained police and traitors,” including “corrupt police who were chased out of North Korea by the Communists” at the Korean-American Conference on November 20, 1946.⁵⁰⁷ Simply, it would be difficult to imagine that former pro-Nazi French government officials were hired by Charles de Gaulle government after their Liberation. However, there was no Charles de Gaulle and Ho Chi Minh in Korea.

The only one job that Syngman Rhee could do was just asking help for America again and again. After all, he did. It was not small. Today, some historians overestimates the role of Syngman Rhee regarding the decisions of the Truman Administration to intervene the Korean War. These historians even looked Syngman Rhee as a hero to save ROK because they argued that the Truman administration would not intervene the Korean War without the role of Syngman Rhee. This does not make sense.

I argue that the Truman administration decided to send American troops to Korea, not because of Rhee Syngman, despite Syngman Rhee. From 1945 to 1950, the US government was concerned about instability in Korean peninsula not only because of the possibilities of Southern invasion of Kim Il Sung but because of the possibilities of Northern invasion of Syngman Rhee. At that time, the Truman administration considered Syngman Rhee as not a peace maker, but as an aggressive invader. The Truman administration worried about both possibilities of invasions

⁵⁰⁷ Former Colonial Police Officers Remaining in Korean National Police, November 1946 are as follows. According to the figure, former colonial polices filled in police positions in 1946 as follows: 100% of superintendent, 63% of Division Chiefs, 80% of Provincial Chiefs, 83% of Inspectors, 75% of Captains and 83% of Lieutenants. They still maintained their positions after liberation of 1945. See Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Regimes 1945-1947* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), 166.

of Kim Il Sung and Syngman Rhee. What the US government wanted from this less significant strategic area, Korea, than Japan and China was only a stable and silent situation, not unstable situation, where possibly would lead the escalating the war outside of peninsula. According to George Kennan's State Department estimate, the Korean peninsula was not a significant area strategically to the US at that time. Kennan's list included the nations and territories of the Atlantic community, the countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East and Japan / Philippines.⁵⁰⁸ That was why the US government did not send many weapons and vehicles, including tanks, to ROKA for a rapid development of ROKA capability.

In fact, some senior American military officers recognized that the ROKA should be strengthened by the US support as soon as possible because of the strong possibility of a North Korean invasion. As early as 1948, General Omar N. Bradley, Army Chief of Staff, challenged the view of the majority of the Joint Chief of Staff, that Korea was "of little strategic value" and that "any commitment to the use of U.S. military forces in Korea would be ill-advised." He strongly urged a reappraisal of the Korean situation before American troops were withdrawn. His views were rejected. A senior American officer in Korea Military Advisory Group, Colonel John E. Baird, also sounded a lonely warning. He reported that the outnumbered ROKAs were thoroughly outgunned by the KPA, who had 122-mm gun with a range of roughly seventeen miles as against the American-supplied 105-mm with an effective range of about seven miles. He urged that the ROKAs be given some means of defense against air attack, recommending that we supply them with F-51 aircraft. His urging went unheeded.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 29.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 16.

Just like the South Korean government, South Korea media was in chaos. South Korea media and government gave wrong information to people. At 7 AM on June 25, when the KPA passed the 38th parallel and broke all defensive lines of the ROKA, Korea Broadcasting System broadcasted that there was no problem and peaceful in 38th parallel. The Department of Defense informed that ROKA 17th Regiment attacked the KPA and moved to North, Haju area. Recorded President Rhee Syngman's speech broadcasted several times around 10PM and 11PM on June 27, which addressed that the situation is not too bad and will get better, because the United Nation will come soon, the government and President will stay in Seoul. However, President Rhee left Seoul at 3 AM on June 27, moved to Daegu at 1230 PM and returned to Daejeon at 0430 PM.⁵¹⁰ Ordinary people did not know what the real situation was on the front line. Most people missed the opportunity to seek refuge to the South. As a result, many people died and experienced in hardship during the KPA occupation period.

North Korean Readiness

The picture of North Korea had similarities and differences from South Korea. I argue that there were different opinions about strategic objectives of the war and invasion plans among North Korean leaders. Official documents of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) show an interesting picture of the opposite side on June 25, 1950. Kim Il Sung called an emergency meeting of cabinet council in the early morning on June 25, 1950. Kim had an announcement at this meeting:

⁵¹⁰ KIMH, *6.25 전쟁사* 2, 73-75.

Rhee Syngman's puppet army invaded to North along all places along the 38th parallel. I sent a warning message to the enemy to stop their invasion, but the enemy continually invaded 1-2 kilometers northern part of the 38th parallel and tried to occupy all area of North Korea. We faced the difficulties and dangers. We have to decide now whether we would be slaves of imperialist countries or peaceful people of independent country. We have to fight against Rhee Syngmans' army. We have to start our revolutionary war for liberation against them. Our army has to start counterattack against the enemy and win the war.⁵¹¹

Kim Il Sung never officially admitted the KPA's attacked first and preemptive strike to the South during his life until he died on July 8, 1994. However, when a former director of the Korea Central Intelligence Agency, Lee Hurak, met with Kim Il Sung for a secret visit on May, 1975 at Kim Il Sung's house in Pyongyang to prepare the 7.4 North-South Joint Declaration, Kim Il Sung said to him that we will not invade the South again.⁵¹²

Two days before the beginning of the Korean War, Kim Tu-bong, the Head of DPRK, had a speech at the KPA 6th Division on June 23, 1950. He said between his tears:

We have to liberate South Korean people. We will start a liberation war soon and will liberate Seoul only for a week. Because Seoul is a heart of South Korea, to control Seoul means to control all areas of South Korea. This will be not a war between states. We have to release captured ROKA during a war. The objective of liberation war is to remove traitors to our nation and to liberate South Korean people. South Koreans are our family. Because this is not a war but a liberation war, declaring war is not necessary."⁵¹³

Kim Tu-bong was born in 1889 and an independent activist based on China. He created the Korean guerilla unit and fought against the Japanese Imperial Army with the Chinese Communist Forces. When he entered North Korea with his military units after Liberation of

⁵¹¹ 조선로동당출판사, *김일성 저작집 6* (평양: 조선로동당 출판사, 1979), 1.; The Korea Worker's Party Press, *Kim Il Sung' writing 6* (Pyongyang: The Korea Worker's Party Press, 1979), 1.

⁵¹² 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1* (Seoul: 나남, 1996), 440.

⁵¹³ *Ibid*, 419-420. This is the interview between the writer, Park Myonglim and Choe Taehwan, a director of state political security department of the KPA on February 1, 1990 in Seoul.

Korea, the Soviet Union asked disarmament to him and his units. Technically, he became the head of DPRK on September 1948. He was one of the Kim Il Sung's rivals.

This is interesting because, technically, Kim Tu-bong was the head of DPRK. Nevertheless, his speech seemed that the end of state for a war was to occupy Seoul. According to the attendees, his voice was almost cried during this speech. Because he was one of soft liners, who argued the KPA only need to occupy Seoul when the invasion plan was made, this speech was only his hope.⁵¹⁴ This shows that there were different opinions to the KPA's invasion plan among the North Korean leaders. Interestingly, the North Korean Defense Minister Cho Yonggon disagreed with the KPA's invasion plan because of a possibility of the US intervention.⁵¹⁵

Ch'oe Yong-gon was born in 1900 and older than Kim Il Sung who was born in 1912. He was the most powerful three leaders of the KPA with Kim Il Sung and Kim Ch'aek because they had worked together in Manchuria and Russia. These three people had strong brotherhood. Ch'oe's position was higher than Kim Il Sung's position before coming to North Korea in Manchuria and Russia. Before the Soviet Union decided to choose Kim Il Sung as a leader, Ch'oe was the strongest candidate for the Soviet Union. Ch'oe was only one who called Kim Il Sung's first name in private places. Most soldiers and officers of the KPA admired Ch'oe. However, Ch'oe had a skeptical view of the KPA's preemptive attack to South because of a possibility of the US intervention.⁵¹⁶ Because of Ch'oe's skeptical view, Ch'oe's position during

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid*, 319-321.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid*, 287- 320.; Korean Broadcasting System, *Documentary – Uncovered Behind Story by Kim Il Sung' Staffs*, 1992.6.23, NARA, RG 242, SA 2005 Item 6/2 "The Assembly Record of the Second Meeting of Director of Security Department of Province"

⁵¹⁶ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 154-155.

the war was a commander of troops in the rear. Kim Tu-bong also had a skeptical view. He hesitated to support the preemptive attack and he supported to finish the war by occupying Seoul.⁵¹⁷ At the emergency meeting of Cabinet Council early morning on June 25, 1950, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Jang Siwoo, stated that we had to be careful to start an entire attack along the 38th parallel because of the US intervention. Kim Il Sung scolded him “Siwoo, you are stupid. Think again. How will the US come without the Soviet intervention? You are such a fool!” Although the preemptive attack of the KPA was almost unanimous decision, there had been some different voices on that among the North Korean leaders. The one of the key debates was whether capturing territory, Seoul, or annihilation of the armed forces, the ROKA. However, Ch’oi Yong-gon’s voice was a minority and he was excluded from all processes of planning and conducting the war.⁵¹⁸

Kim Il Sung’s group and Pak Hon-yong’s group, who was the leader of the South Korean Workers’ Party (SKWP), a prominent communist, and the first foreign minister, had a different view about how to win the war. Pak Hon-yong was the most famous communist in Korea at that time and he was imprisoned in a prison during the colonial period because of his independent movements. After liberation in 1945, he became the leader of the SKWP in South Korea and went to Pyongyang because of a difficult political situation in South Korea. However, many party members of the SWKP were still were in South Korea and led to many protests and demonstrations. When Pak came to North Korea, he became No.2 position and the first foreign minister. At this time, Kim Il Sung’s group and Pak Hon-yong’s group were political rivals for

⁵¹⁷박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 1, 290-291

⁵¹⁸*Ibid*, 301-302.

leadership in North Korea.⁵¹⁹ Kim Il Sung and Pak Hon-yong always went together to Moscow for every meeting with Stalin.

Kim Il Sung believed that two Korea should be united by a conventional warfare between the KPA and the ROKA. Pak Hon-yong believed that South Korea should be liberated by Bolshevik style people's revolution and guerilla battles. Pak Hon-yong thought his political power, based on members of the SKWP in South, would be reduced if the KPA's invasion liberated South Korea.⁵²⁰ Pak Hon-yong's men – the members of the South Korean Workers' Party (SKWP) and the guerilla forces in South Korea – started massive guerilla battles against the Syngman Rhee's regime during 1948 and 1949. Because ROK Army attacked those guerilla forces, Pak Hon-yong and these guerilla forces wanted to start a revolutionary war between North and South Korea as soon as possible. Thus, Pak Hon-yong's group suggested these guerilla forces and 200,000 SKWP members in South Korea would start a revolutionary war around August and September 1949 and the KPA's role would be only a supporting role for these guerilla forces' revolutionary war in early 1949.⁵²¹ Kim Il Sung's group suggested the KPA and the guerilla forces would start a war at the same time and the KPA would attack some parts of South Korea, such as Ongjin, Kaesung and Samchuk areas, in order to get attention of main ROK army units. The Soviet Union rejected this idea about a revolutionary war of guerilla forces and 200,000 SKWP members in South Korea. Instead, the Soviet Union suggested the KPA's conventional war. One member of Kim Il Sung's group, Kang gon, the Chief of Joint Staff, started to criticize Pak Hon-yong's groups' revolutionary war plan in November 1949.

⁵¹⁹ 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1*, 260-261.

⁵²⁰ 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 152-153.

⁵²¹ 박병엽 증언록 2 전 노동당 고위간부가 본 비밀회동 김일성과 박헌영 그리고 여운형 (Seoul: 선인, 2010), 298-314. ; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 152-153.

Nonetheless, because Pak Hon-yong's group's political power was as powerful as Kim Il Sung's group, the revolutionary war plan of guerilla forces and SKWP members were still considered the main option of war scenario in Pyongyang. However, in March 1950, Kim Sam-yong and Lee Ju Ha, the main leaders of guerilla forces in South Korea, were arrested and the military capability of guerilla forces rapidly decreased. Pak Hon-yong still overestimated the capability of guerilla forces and numbers of the SKWP members and argued a revolutionary war scenario.⁵²² Kim Il Sung believed Pak Hon-yong's assumption about 200,000 SKWP members' massive uprisings, but there was no massive uprisings when the KPA occupied in Seoul. During the war, Kim Il Sung and Pak Hon-yong strongly fought each other regarding this assumption.⁵²³ The plan for war of North Korea was not simple but complex because of this political struggle and battle for hegemony.

In fact, middle-low level of the KPA officers did not know the first strike plan of the KPA until one or two days before the beginning of the war because it was a top secret. These middle and low level officers and enlisted men firstly knew the first strike plan of the KPA when they assembled at the gathering place just before the first strike of the war. Many soldiers did not know their first strike of the war. Even some of them believed that the war was begun by the ROKA after some months of the war. For instance, the KPA 6th Division was dispatched along the 38th parallel from Sariwon on June 23, 1950. Most officers and soldiers of the 6th Division did not know the war plan. On the evening of June 24, hours before the war began at 4AM on following day, one Soviet advisor made an announcement about the war at the battalion

⁵²² 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 1, 279-282.

⁵²³ 박병엽, *박병엽 증언록 2 전 노동당 고위간부가 본 비밀회동 김일성과 박헌영 그리고 여운형*, 298-314.; 장준익, *北韓 人民軍隊史*, 166.; 박명림, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원* 1, 325.

commanders' meeting of the division and the 6th division knew that the war would begin.⁵²⁴ The Soviet advisor stated:

Tomorrow is Sunday. 25% of ROKA officers and soldiers stayed out barracks in front line. Because the ROKA is not a trained soldiers, their do not have defense capability. And South Korean people do not like their Rhee Syngman government and have waited for a new government. The American force will not come because we are able to arrive to Pusan in a week.⁵²⁵

Because the Soviet advisors planned the invasion plan from April 1950, only very few North Korean leaders, including Kim Il Sung, knew the details of the plan.⁵²⁶ Because Kim Il Sung manipulated the war as a counter attack to the preemptive strike of the ROK army, the Soviet advisors and Kim Il Sung hid their invasion plans to even their commanders and staffs. This did not make sense militarily, but many former KPA soldiers did not know what they are going until one or two days before the beginning of the war. After the war, Kim's regime never allowed their preemptive strike and started developing a community spirit of victimization among North Korean people. This is still the powerful forces to maintain the militarized garrison state not only by a top-down of Kim's family dictatorship but also by a bottom up support of ordinary North Korean people.

The Soviet advisors planned details of invasion plan and written them in Russian. The Soviet advisors and Kim Il Sung completely excluded the KPA soldiers from China. Soviet-Koreans translated details of invasion plans and the KPA soldiers from China did not see them until the eve of the war. Nonetheless, it is interesting that many soldiers and officers of the KPA did not recognize their preemptive strike plan, even the day before June 25, 1950. They thought

⁵²⁴*Ibid*, 420.

⁵²⁵ This is the testimony of Ji Kichol, who was a 3rd Battalion Commander of Artillery Regiment, 6th Division of the KPA. From KIMH, *Interview Number 0-21*, 1969.9.2.

⁵²⁶ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 171.; 박명립, *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1*, 351-355.

their movement to South was for an exercise that Kim Il Sung announced. The captured orders issued by the KPA, including *Reconnaissance Order* No. 1 of the KPA 4th Division and *Reconnaissance Order* No. 2 of the KPA 2nd Division, shows that very few high-level commanders and staff shared the North Korea's preemptive strike to South just before the war.⁵²⁷ The KPA General Headquarters issued top-secret reconnaissance and attack orders for the southward invasion. The original copy of the reconnaissance order was handwritten in Russian, and was seized during the war in Seoul on October 4, 1950. From this reconnaissance order, it is clear that the KPA 4th Division had Seoul as its objective and the 2nd Division sought to move along the Ch'oonch'on-Seoul road to cross the Han River and advance in the direction of Inch'on and Suwon.⁵²⁸ Those two orders were written in Russian.

When the KPA troop maneuver was almost completed, Operation No.1 was issued to the attacking corps and divisions, and they in turn issued orders to their subordinate units. According to Yoo Sung Ch'ul, the Chief of Operation Bureau of the KPA General Staff Headquarters and who was exiled to Russia, the Preemptive Strike Operation Plan included operation orders. Park Kil Nam, the Chief of the Engineer Bureau at the KPA General Staff Headquarters, said to have ordered Ju Young Bok, Engineer Major of the KPA 2nd Corps, to translate into Korean the Engineer Appendix to Operational No.1, written in Russian. Yoo knew that the Preemptive Strike plan was a top secret and only made by the Soviet advisor. For a translation of that plan written in Russian, only small number of the KPA military leaders from Soviet participated in

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, 126.; General Staff of the North Korean Army to the Chief of the 4th Division, "Reconnaissance Order No. 1", June 18, 1950; The original copy of the order written in Russian. From *Ibid*, 747-748; *Ibid*, 126-127; General Staff of the North Korean Army to the Chief of the 2nd Division, "Reconnaissance Order No. 1", June 18, 1950; The original copy of the order written in Russian. From *Ibid*, 743-746.; 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 161-170.

⁵²⁸ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 125.

translation but they completely excluded people from China. The Soviet advisors ordered Ju Young Bok to remove the Russian written plan after translating them into Korean.⁵²⁹ The first operation orders were issued almost a week prior to war by the KPA General Staff Headquarters. The Operation orders issued by the KPA 4th Division were captured by the U.S. forces in Taejon on July 16, 1950 and ones by the 2nd Division also were seized during the war.⁵³⁰

In all front lines, all KPA units raced to capture Seoul with their maximum speed based on these plans. They looked like the German advancement in France and Russia during the Second World War. They did not look like guerrilla forces from a small poor colony which fought against the Japanese Imperial Army in mountains of Manchuria. Their combat capability, which combined artillery and tanks, was no worse than the ones of modern professional forces. Both commanders and soldiers of the KPA and ROKA were very young and inexperienced as professional combined conventional forces. Nevertheless, the KPA troops' irresistible movement looked like the Panzer forces of the Nazi Army in France and Russia at least at the initial stage of the war. The Red Army in 1941 lost the war at initial stage of the war not because they only had fearful of higher commanders, ideology, nationalism and rage. The most serious Soviet failure was neither strategic surprise nor tactical surprise, but institutional surprise. In June 1941, the Red Army and Air Force were in transition, changing their organization, leadership, equipment,

⁵²⁹ 장준익, 北韓 人民軍隊史, 158-159.; Yu Song Chol, "My Testimony", *Hankook Ilbo*, November 9 and 13, 1990; 주영복, 내가 겪은 조선전쟁 1, 244-245; Chu Yong Bok was a Russian translator, and was the Deputy Chief of the Engineer Section, KPA 2nd Corps.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid*, 129.; Staff of the 4th Infantry Division, *Operational Order* No.1, Okgyeri, June 22, 1950; The original copy of the order was included in Appendix. See *Ibid*, 749 – 752, 130.; 2nd Division Headquarters, *Operational Order* No.10001, narrow valley, northeast of HILL 214, June 22, 1950; The original copy of the order was included in Appendix. See *Ibid*, 737-742.

training, troop dispositions, and defensive plans. This institutional surprise was most responsible for the catastrophic Soviet defeats of 1941.⁵³¹

Allan Millett points out that the initial superiority of the KPA hid several weaknesses. First, the North Korean generals had no more experience in conducting a campaign than their South Korean counterparts. Their subordinate at the regimental and battalion level had little or no relevant experience. There is no evidence of air-ground coordination in the North Korean offensive. The KPA of 1950 was much like its Soviet counterpart of 1941, devoid of initiative, fearful of higher commanders, immune to realistic adjustments of operational orders, and sustained by a hearty diet of ideology, nationalism, and rage.⁵³²

Because both KPA and ROKA commanders had little experiences at the regimental and battalion level as conventional forces, Millett's argument is partly true. But more than half soldiers and most commanders higher than regiment of the KPA had military experiences more than two years from Manchuria and the Chinese Civil War whether it was as a guerrilla forces or the Chinese forces. Many KPA commanders had military experiences more than ten years in China. In terms of military experiences, the members of the KPA were much more mature forces than ones of ROKA on June, 1950. The members of KPA had not only ideology, nationalism and rage but also diverse military experiences. Because more than half members of the KPA shared experiences together over the last several years during the guerrilla battle against the Japanese Imperial Army in Manchuria and against Kukmindang Army in China, they had not only fearful

⁵³¹ David M. Glantz and Jonathan House, *When Titan Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* (Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1995), 44.

⁵³² Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-51*, 89.

of higher commanders but also bloody brotherhood by sharing bitter memory as a primary group.⁵³³

Although, according to the Soviet Ambassador Colonel General Terentii Fomich Shtykov's assessment, the KPA faced diverse challenges, such as a lack of command and control and a trouble with line of communications during the first several days of the war. The KPA's invasion had many problems strategically and operationally, such as a lack of logistics, supply, and reserve forces in rear area and a long stay at Seoul, but that was no serious tactical problems to block their race to South in the initial stage of the war.⁵³⁴

The KPA not only had no detailed plan for second and third stage of war but also they did not have enough reserve forces, supply, logistics, and mobilization plan in rear area. ROKA also had same problem. Military romanticism of North Korean elites motivated by the victory of Mao's army and their amateurism, which did not plan a plan-B which assumed the US intervention or no uprising in South, were strategically a huge problem.

Shtykov pointed out some problems of the KPA during the initial stage of the war in his report to the Deputy Chief of the Soviet General Staff on June 26, 1950. Firstly, the communication from the headquarters to the units in front line was stopped. For instance, command posts of battalions moved without any report to higher units. Secondly, inexperienced commanders of the KPA led to problems such as how the KPA soldiers used their artillery and

⁵³³NARA, RG 242, SA 2009 Item 9/120, “극비-문화간부성원 통계표” (1949.12.15)

⁵³⁴시오토마이 노브오, *모스크바와 김일성: 냉전기의 북한 1945-1961* (Seoul: 논형, 2012), 107.

tanks in inappropriate way. Shtykov assessed the passion and mental power of the KPA soldiers positively.⁵³⁵

In three days, the KPA captured Seoul. The Pedestrian Bridge and the three railway bridges of Han River were blown up. When the Pedestrian Bridge was blown up, approximately 500-800 refugees and cars were still on it and lost their lives. The demolition of the Han River bridges was conducted without taking any prior evacuation and withdrawal measures for citizens and troops. As a result of that, most of the 1.5 million Seoul citizens had to live under the enemy rule and the vehicles, equipment, and supplies of the ROKA were taken by the enemy. This hurry withdrawal shows a desperate situation of the ROK Army and an irresistible advancement of the KPA. Because of a successful delay of the ROKA 6th infantry division against the 2nd division and the 12th division of the KPA in Ch'unch'on area, the KPA advanced toward Ch'unch'on the evening of 27th of June, not on 25th of June, the beginning day of the war as they planned.⁵³⁶ When the North Koreans attacked on June 25, Colonel Kim Jongho correctly judged that the North Korean weight of the attack was along the Chunchon-Hongchon axis, and he massed his artillery and two best regiments along the narrow corridors created by the Hantan and Soyang rivers. Anti-tank "suicide squads" caught T-34 and SU-76s in defiles and knocked them out, blocking the roads. Because of heroic commitments of suicide squads, the KPA operationally faced huge challenges. This delay allowed the KPA's main advancement to occupy Seoul in three days after the beginning of the war. Operationally, it became a decisive problem because these three days allowed ROKA to withdrawal their main army and to build defense

⁵³⁵ ЦАМО РФ, фонд 5, опись 918795, дело 122, лист 9-14.

⁵³⁶ Millet, *The War for Korea: 1950-51*, 96.

line. Nevertheless, the KPA's surprise attack was tactically very successful and its professional combat capability was a shock not only to South Koreans but also to people all over the world.

The UN resolution and the statement of the US President on 27th of June did not stop the KPA's movement to South. After resupplying and a parade in Seoul, the KPA started to advance again. The gap between the KPA and the ROKA on combat readiness and military capability was not small. The KPA had eight infantry divisions all at full strength and two divisions at half strength, a motorcycle reconnaissance regiment, an armored brigade equipped with T-34 medium tanks, and five brigades of border constabulary. General Ridgway recalled that it was more than just numbers of soldiers and modern equipment.

US Readiness

The American picture was not better. Adrian Lewis explains that Truman committed the nation to a war the services were ill-prepared to fight, even the Air Force, when the KPA invaded ROK on 25 June 1950. The Air Force's emphasis on strategic bombing left it in a poor state of readiness to carry out conventional missions such as air superiority – fighter to fighter – close air support of forces on the ground, interdiction, and strategic and operational air mobility. The Army had fewer than 600,000 men, ten active divisions and their primary missions were the occupation and rehabilitation of Germany and Japan not training for war. Their equipment from the Second World War was obsolete. When war came, the US Army was too small, with too many missions, dispersed in too many parts of the world.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁷ Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, 79-80.

The US Army in 1950 was not as strong as their army during the Second World War. The Army declined from 6 million and eighty-nine divisions in 1945 to 552,239 men and ten divisions in 1948. Lewis explains an unpreparedness of the US armed forces in 1950:

Truman and his advisors ignored the warnings, and as a consequence share as much of the blame for the cause of the Korean War, as the British for the causes of the Second World War, which, many people believe, was the result of their “policy of appeasement.”.. The Army did not have significant rapid deployment force, and airpower could not stop the advancing North Korean Army, nor could the Navy and Marine Corps. Had US forces deployed from the west coast they would have arrived too late to save South Korea... It was Truman’s policies that so damaged the ability of the armed forces were not accompanied by commensurate reductions in missions....The majority of the Army was not prepared for war. All the reductions in the size of the Army, all the missions and responsibilities, all the overseas deployments, and all the budget cuts made it impossible for the Army to train in a comprehensive manner....Eisenhower noted the Army’s lack of preparation for war invited war.⁵³⁸

The Task Force Smith story was a good example to show how American forces treated the KPA and how the KPA gave a surprise to American forces. The Task Force Smith, the first American force, left Pusan station at 8 PM on the 1st of July and arrived in Taejon consisted of eight enlisted men and seventeen officers among the infantry and 125 enlisted men and nine officers among the artillerymen. When these American forces arrived in the front line from a comfortable life in Japan, they suffered from a hard and dirty battle conditions, and ignored South Korean soldiers, who were in retreat. Task Force Smith had a strong confidence as the soldiers of a superpower country and ignored the KPA soldiers. As an example of this over confidence, Colonel Smith scolded South Korean soldiers who laid an explosive on the bridge to stop the invading KPA tanks. One of the artillerymen later expressed the prevailing opinion.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid*, 81-84.

“Everyone, the Americas, thought the enemy would turn around and go back when they found out who was fighting.”⁵³⁹

At 0816 the first American artillery fire of the Korean War hurtled through the air toward the North Korean tanks. The two damaged tanks pulled off to the side of the road, but the tanks did not stop to engage the infantry. Following the first group of eight tanks came others at short intervals, usually in groups of four. There were a total of 33 tanks in the column. Tank fire had killed or wounded approximately twenty men in Smith’s position. In the end, Task Force Smith suffered its heaviest casualties. There were more than 150 men killed, wounded, or missing from the Task Force Smith while the KPA only suffered from 42 killed, 85 wounded, and four tanks lost. But the battle did not just result in numbers and losses, the battle had a greater influence. The soldier’s defeat of that lives lost the Task Force Smith led to psychological shock to American and ROK Army. In particular, South Korean soldiers felt serious desperation because American forces, which had been regarded as a superpower and been held in high regard, were also defeated by the KPA.⁵⁴⁰ General Matthew Ridgway explains that the battle of the Task Smith as a tragic picture of the US forces at the early stage of the war who trained for occupation rather than for battle, fresh from luxury of peacetime in Japan where they lived on delicacies and found servants to shine their shoes.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁹온창일, *韓民族戰爭史* (Seoul, 集文堂, 2001), 567-571.

⁵⁴⁰ Roy E. Appleman, *South To the Nakdong, North To the Yalu* (Washington D.C., Center of Military History United States Army, 1992), 65-76.

⁵⁴¹ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 26.

The KPA's Advancement

After capturing Seoul, Kang Kon, the chief of the KPA General Staff, came south to the war. Kang Gon was born in 1918 and one of the closet friends of Kim Il Sung. He was a member of guerrilla forces with Kim Il Sung and became a member of the 88th Special Reconnaissance Brigade of the Red Army with Kim Il Sung. He became the first Chief of the KPA General Staff in 1948. He was died on September 8, 1950 because of a mine explosion. Kim Il Sung became a pallbearer in his funeral. Millett explains that Kang Kon and his generals loved to use Soviet Deep Battle concept of the Second World War.⁵⁴² Andrei Kokoshin, who was a former First Deputy Defense Minister of the Russian Federation, explains that the theory of “deep battle” or “deep operations” merits special consideration, since it underpinned the development of the offensive strategy and tactics of the Soviet military from the 1930s until the 1980s. This theory remains a source of pride for the Soviet military, who still give these new kinds of battle and operations priority because they drastically changed the strategic landscape during the Second World War and for decades afterward.⁵⁴³ However, the operation and formation of the KPA was not typical the Soviet Army.

⁵⁴² The theory of “deep battle” can be traced back to the late 1920’s to works by Tukhachevsky, N.E. Varfalameyev, A.K. Kalinovsky, I.P. Uborevich, V.K. Triandofilov, and others whose ideas were incorporated in the Field Regulations of 1929. A great deal was contributed to the development of the basic principles of the theory by Red Army members G.S. Isserson, E.A. Shilovsky, S.N. Ammosov, A.N. Lapchinsky, A.I. Yegorov, chief of the General Staff, and B.M. Shaposhnikov, who as chief of the Academy of the General Staff from 1932 to 1935. In the early 1930s, the theory was included in the curriculum of the Frunze Military Academy. From Andrei A. Kokoshin, *Soviet Strategic Thought, 1917-91* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), 161.

⁵⁴³ Kokoshin, *Soviet Strategic Thought*, 160.

To employ “deep battle” strategy, the KPA would fix American and ROK units with limited frontal attacks, and then conduct deep envelopments with sharp, penetrating attacks that bypassed strong points. The objective of these attacks was to set up roadblocks followed by ambush withdrawals and counterattacks. Another benefit of deep attacks was that they might overrun American artillery battalions. Attacks begun during the night prevented air strikes, and the invaders camouflaged themselves in well-situated field fortifications.⁵⁴⁴

According to David Glantz, one of the prominent Russian military historians, the premier operational level organization of the Soviet Army was the front, which was designated to perform both operational and strategic missions. Front operations would involve a series of army operations executed either simultaneously or successively. By exploiting the operational capabilities of new weapons, fronts would split the operational structure of the enemy along the front and in the depths into isolated pockets. Front would then destroy those pockets to encircle and defeat the resisting enemy forces in any given direction with the envelopment of the whole depth of its operational organization. Fronts, operating in sectors of from 200-300 kilometers, deployed strong shock groups in one or several penetration sectors of up to 50 kilometers in width.⁵⁴⁵

However, Korea was not Manchuria or Eastern Europe and these forces had to be adapted by forces on the ground. In contrast, more than seventy percent of Korean peninsula was mountainous. Terrain and geography of Korean peninsula was not a perfect place for the Soviet Deep Operation, which had been successful in a vast and extensive plain of Eastern Europe and

⁵⁴⁴ Millett, *The War for Korea: 1950-51*, 190.

⁵⁴⁵ David M. Glantz, *Soviet Military Operational Art: In Pursuit of Deep Battle* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Frank Cass, 1991), 169.

Manchuria. Furthermore, the KPA was a small army and only had about 250 tanks. This terrain was suitable for dirty infantry battles rather than a deep operation of massive mechanized forces. That was why the KPA tactics and formation was different from typical Soviet Deep Operations. Nevertheless, the KPA conducted maximum speed advancement by using Soviet tanks which the ROKA did not have. And most members of the KPA had many Mao style military experiences of dirty guerrilla battles from Manchuria and China. These mixed military capabilities, mechanized tanks' advancement from Soviet sources, and a dirty infantry battle style from China, were strong advantages of the KPA.

From 1948 until the autumn of 1950, Korean units that had fought in China filtered back home: the total numbers were at least one hundred thousand. Koreans fought all the way until to the last battle for Hainan Island in May of 1950. Several sources had different data about the number of Korean soldiers returned from CCF but the probably between 100,000 and 150,000. The CIA placed the KPA total at about 95,000 in June of 1950, of which 40,000 to 50,000 were thought to be Chinese veterans. That meant that an even larger force of Koreans was still in reserve or in China when the war began. The US Army G-2 thought upwards of 80 percent of the KPA officers had served in China. This did not include the Manchurian guerrillas from the 1930s, who also worked with the Chinese, such as Kim Ch'aek, Ch'oe Yong-gon, Kim Il, and Kim Il Sung. Cumings concludes that almost the entire high command of the KPA were all veterans of Sino-Korean joint fighting.⁵⁴⁶

Further evidence that Korean soldiers returned from China lies in the diaries of individuals from Korean Chinese Communist Forces (CCF). These diaries show a mixture of

⁵⁴⁶ Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War Volume 2*, 362-363.

Chinese and Korean experience. One had pictures of Mao and Chu The plastered against the front and back; as the soldier moved from China to Korea in the spring 1950, his diary entries changed from Chinese to Sino-Korean script.⁵⁴⁷ Additional evidence exists in the Korean translation of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* that the KPA published in 1949, and a collection of documents from the Chinese civil war in 1950; guerrillas in the South carried Maoist texts on guerrilla war under false covers. Cumings demonstrates that more than half of all KPA soldiers had their military experience in the Chinese civil war, thus carrying in their heads a deep Maoist influence. More than 100,000 Koreans fought in the Chinese civil war, gaining battle experience that enabled them to crush the ROKA and humiliate an American army with far superior fire power, until American and South Korean forces outnumbered them on September 1950.⁵⁴⁸

In the end, Taejon lost on July 20 and the temporary capital of South Korea moved to Taegu. The KPA assaulted Taegu from the north, northwest, and west, and drove the U.N. forces back toward Pusan. Using Soviet-taught tactics, the KPA sought out soft spots in the U.N. defensive positions.⁵⁴⁹ Ridgway estimates that American's ignorance of the terrain and the extreme faultiness of the map they tried to make use of gave the enemy an added advantage and made his own familiarity with the landscape a sort of secret weapon. Roads Americans looked for often did not exist, or turned out to be mere footpaths that no wheeled vehicles could negotiate.⁵⁵⁰ Poor roads and conditions made the American forces condition weaker. The terrain and weather were not familiar to the American forces. Heavy rain fell in July, hot weather continued in August and a typhoon came at the end of August. During the winter, intense cold

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 364.; NARA, RG 242, SA 2010, Item 5/188.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 364. ; NARA, RG 242, SA 2012, item 8/118; SA2009, item 6/114; SA 2010, item 3/155.

⁵⁴⁹ United States Army Center of Military History, *Korea 1950* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996), 19.

⁵⁵⁰ Ridgway, *The Korean War*, 4.

and heavy snow made the situation more difficult for the Americans. The soldiers of the KPA were familiar with the harsh conditions and weather because most of them had diverse combat experiences from Manchuria and Northern China where the climate was much worse than the Korean peninsula. The KPA patience and mental strength against harsh conditions were much stronger than those of the American forces, who entered the front from a luxury Japan life, and also for ROKA who lived in the milder Southern area and lacked battle experiences.

Because of heavy casualties of about 30,000 on July 29, the KPA forced into the services as replacements every able-bodied man and boy in the area that they dominated. Because of a lack of reserve forces, a longer supply line and, a fear of strategic bombing, the KPA had to push all U.N. forces off the peninsula as soon as possible. Their objective was to occupy Pusan before August 15, the fifth anniversary of Korean Liberation.

Having been surprised by the KPA at the very beginning of the war, the ROKA was forced, over a period of forty five days, to move as far south as the Naktong River line. About 90% of the South Korean territory was overrun by the KPA by August 1. Only part of north and south Kyongsang provinces centering Taegu and Pusan was saved. The US Eighth Army faced one humiliating tactical defeat after another, until it was surrounded in the Pusan perimeter.⁵⁵¹ In early July, American daily situation reports said that the KPA infantry was first class, its armor and service unsurpassed since the Second World War. Americans were especially impressed with the 6th KPA Division, formed entirely of CCF Koreans and led by Pang Ho-san, which participated in the initial fighting on Ongjin, swept southward along the coast through the

⁵⁵¹ Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, 80.

Chollas, and then abruptly turned east, occupying Chinju by August 1 and thereby directly menacing Pusan.⁵⁵²

Under the circumstances, the Nakdong River line became a final line for the South Koreans to keep their freedom.⁵⁵³ To the ROKA and the U.N. Forces, the Nakdong River Defensive Line was a final diehard defense. The KPA started an all-court-pressing strategy and tactics against the all-court-filling strategy and tactics of the U.N. forces. The KPA launched massive attacks separately in August and September.⁵⁵⁴ Indeed, Ridgway's expression was true in this bloody battle between hungry offenders and desperate defenders. Their fervent desire was hotter than a hot summer of August in Korea:

There is still one absolute weapon...the only weapon capable of operating with complete effectiveness-of dominating every inch of terrain where human beings live and fight, and of doing it under all conditions of light and darkness, heat and cold, desert and forest, mountain and plain. That weapon is man himself.⁵⁵⁵

Although the ROKA failed to stop the KPA irresistible force, its bloody contribution toward the U.N. forces defended the Pusan perimeter. Without their blood and sacrifice, South Korea would have been disappeared. This situation was so desperate that 35,000 South Korean students went to war in their school uniforms, school caps banded in white tape, and armed with old Japanese rifles. The ROK official government count of the dead later reached more than 2,000.⁵⁵⁶ Because these students were not registered as the enlisted men, their individual records for honor do not exist now. Their sacrifice was very helpful for a final defense of U.N. forces. They are forgotten heroes.

⁵⁵² Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War Volume 2*, 657.

⁵⁵³ KIMH, *The Korean War 1*, 568.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 569.

⁵⁵⁵ Appleman, *South to the Nakdong*, 235.

⁵⁵⁶ Millett, *The Korean War: 1950-51*, 158.

The question is how the KPA did this. How did the KPA become the professional modern army so quickly? Who made the KPA? Who were the members of the KPA? According to Svenchin, modern combined warfare is completely different from guerrilla and insurgency battle. Giving weapons and tanks to someone's hand does not guarantee the creation of a successful modern combined armed force. Modern warfare as the KPA conducted it is complex. It is both art and science with a huge battle area. Modern warfare includes maneuvering, firing, logistics, supply, mobilization, transportation, training, schooling, communication, ammunition, intelligence, food, doctrine, leadership, staff, troop-leading procedure, command and control. Building modern armed forces, therefore is a difficult task. Building forces in Afghanistan is a good example of how difficult a creation a successful modern army can be.

The situation of Korea of 1945 was not better than a situation of Afghanistan for building a modern army today. Korea of 1945 was a wilderness for building military forces. There had been a pre-modern Army in Korea before 19th century, but no tradition of Korean modern army in Korean history. Joseon, a Korean country from 1392 to 1910 before the Japanese colonial period from 1910 to 1945, had ignored soldiers and military culture over the last six hundred years. Gregory Handerson, a former U.S. diplomatic official to South Korea, explained that the Lee dynasty of Joseon, remembering only the chaos and the dire results of overthrow of civil rule in 1392, lastingly repressed the military and usurped its top positions. Since the civil officials learned notoriously little of military matters and no one was allowed to remain in any post long enough to acquire expertise, the decline of the entire military establishment – forts, equipment, training, and morale – proceeded with rare reprieve throughout the dynasty. At its end, Japanese subversion of what remained of Korea's armed forces was comparatively simple and almost complete. When formally disbanded on August 1, 1907, they

numbered only 6,000 men, and only one battalion in Seoul and a few troops in Wonju and on Kanghwa revolted. During the Japanese period, Korea did not have its own forces. Anti-Japanese resistance in Manchuria and China was carried on by many brave Korean guerrillas, but no Korean Army worthy of the word existed from 1907 until 1946.⁵⁵⁷

On August of 1945, Korea was one of the poorest countries, which did not have their modern conventional forces for several decades. Over the hundred years, Korea was a “tributary” state of China, relying on a deferential relationship with that power to preserve its independence. Korea endured successive invasions from the Mongols, the Japanese and the Manchus. Korea maintained itself as the “hermit kingdom,” using its younger brother status in relation to China in the Confucian system of East Asia to maintain its isolation from the rest of the world.⁵⁵⁸ However, after only five years, the KPA gave such a strong impression to world people at least from June 25 to Inchon Landing, September 15 of 1950. Although the KPA did not win the war, the KPA clearly offered an insult to American forces, which was the number one superpower after the Second World War.

However, the KPA soldiers became one of the worst victims from this with ROK army soldiers. To the Kremlin, the KPA soldiers were just one of the useful chesses for security of the Soviet Union. The KPA soldiers were not Russian people. The Kremlin did not care a sacrifice of the KPA soldiers. Stalin achieved his strategic objective to lure the enemy as long as possible because Russian soldiers did not pay the price of this delayed war. Instead, Stalin’s junior partners – the KPA and CVF soldiers – paid the price. Kim Il Sung had to take all responsibilities for all sacrifices of this tragic event. However, after the war, Kim skillfully used

⁵⁵⁷ Henderson, *Korea*, 335-336.

⁵⁵⁸ Stueck, *The Korean War*, 13.

this war for strengthening his authority and dictatorship by purging his political rivals and manipulating a community spirit of victimization among North Korean people.

9. Conclusion

Russian people enjoyed the victory of the Second World War when the war ended in 1945. However, Russian people humiliated when the Cold War ended in 1991. Some Russian people thought that they could live in a better condition if they follow the way of life of Western Capitalist countries. However, economy of Russia was in trouble and politics of Russia was in chaos after the Cold War. Because of this humiliation and failed Westernized project, revival of great motherland is unanimously consensus to Russian people today. Putin's Russia has pursued a strong Russia back to a world stage. Putin's strategy based on pragmatism and power politics is not a new but a familiar one because it was similar to Stalin's strategy after the Second World War.

The Kremlin did not control all communist countries as many scholars assumed during the Cold War. Instead, the Kremlin used its allies for interests of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was neither a protector nor a guardian of its junior partners. However, junior partners of the Soviet Union was useful shields and security buffer zones to the Soviet Union. The Kremlin did not see newly small communist countries as equal revolutionary brothers, but only considered them as useful security buffer zones. Because Russian people seriously suffered from the Second World War, Russian people did not want another war in 1945. Russian people only needed security and economic recovery. Russian people did not want support for permanent revolutions outside of Russia but only needed security buffer zones. Stalin was a realistic statist and a cold calculator, not a revolutionary idealist. In a foreign policy realm, Stalin of 1945 was a master of realistic power politics. Stalin manipulated the war for security of the Soviet Union. His junior partners paid the price for enhancing security of the Soviet Union.

10. Bibliographies

Primary Sources

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Record Group 242

NARA, RG 242, SA 2005, Item 2/113. 최용건, “인민군 창건 2 주년 기념사 – 조국통일독립의 강력한 담보로 되는 조선인민군은 적을 소탕하기에 항상 준비되어 있다,” *인민* 2 (1950): 39.; 이기석, 남반부인민유격대의 영웅한 구국투쟁,” *인민*, No. 7 (July, 1950).

NARA, RG 242 SA 2005, Item 1/34.

NA, RG 242, SA 2005, Item 6/2 “*The Assembly Record of the Second Meeting of Director of Security Department of Province.*”

NARA RG 242, SA 2006, Box 15, Item 20, 조소친선 (Korea-Soviet Amity), The Korea-Soviet Cultural Association Central Committee, November, 1949.

NARA RG 242 SA 2007, Box 8 Item 99A, *인민항공* (People's Air Plane) No. 2, Issue 5 (1948.12.28)

NARA RG 242, SA 2007, Box 9, Item 99B, *인민항공* (People's Air Plane) No. 2, Issue. 6 (1948.12.28)

NARA, RG 242, SA 2008, Box Unknown, No Unknown, 군사참고자료 선집 (2) 군사훈련

NARA, RG 242, SA 2008, Box Unknown, No Unknown, 군사참고자료 선집 (3) 특수전투

NARA RG 242, SA 2008 Box 1, Item 104, *소련은 가장 위대한 국가이다.* (The Soviet Union was the greatest state).

NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Box 3, Item 150, “Report on the 39th anniversary of March 8 International Women's Day,” Central Committee of North Korean Democratic Women's League (March 1950), 15-17.

NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Box 1, Item 18, 1-2.

NARA, RG 242, SA 2009, Box 1, Item 18, 1.

NARA, RG 242, SA 2009 Item 9/120, 극비 (문화간부성원 통계표).

NARA, RG 242, SA 2009 Item 9/120, “극비-문화간부성원 통계표” (1949.12.15)

NARA, RG 242, SA2009, item 6/114

NARA, RG 242, SA 2010, Item 5/188.

NARA RG 242, SA 2010 Box 5, Item 52, *인민항공* (*People's Air Plane*) No. 2, Issue. 3 (1948.12.28)

NARA RG 242, SA 2010, Item 3/155

NARA, RG 242, SA 2012, Item 8/118.

NARA, RG242, Box 25, File No. 200623, *군사지식* no.1 (1950); 리승엽, “조국통일을 위한 남반부 인민의 유격투쟁,” *근로자* No. 1 (January 1950)

NARA RG 242, Box 8, File No. 200694, *Joseon Hwabo* (Joseon Picture Collection) Issue 2, 1949, August 30, 1949

NARA RG 242, Box 8, File No. 200694, *Nodongja* (Worker) Issue 10, 1949, August 30, 1949.

NARA RG 242, Box 5A, File No. 200643 *쏘베트신보* (Newspaper on The Soviet Union), August 2, 1950.

NARA RG 242, Box 13A/B, File No. 200847.

NARA RG 242, *Jang Si Woo*, *소련참관기* (*Visit to the Soviet Union*), February 1, 1950, *Industrial Ministry*.

NARA RG 242, Item 60, 1.

NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 1/45.

NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 2/45.

NARA RG 242, Item 91-2, 9/45, 10/45.

NARA RG 242, Item 60, Application Forms.

NARA RG 242, File No. 200456. Soldiers' notes

NARA RG 242, File No. 200779. Soldiers' notes

NARA RG 242, Box 10, File No. 200775. Letters and pictures.

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Transcripts of Conversation between Stalin and Zhu Enlai held 20 August 1952, 3. September 1952, and 19 September 1952 from Danny Rozas and Kathryn Weathersby, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* vol. 6-7 (Winter 1995/1996), 5-20.

“Meeting between Stalin and Kim Il Sung.” March 5, 1949. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 5 (Spring 1995), 4-5.

“Ciphred telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, 30 January 1950,” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 5 (Spring, 1995), 9.

“Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinsky transmitting note from Kim Il Sung to Soviet Government, March 9, 1950,” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* Issue 6-7 (Winter 1995/1996), 37.

“*Telegram from Stykov on Preparations for an attack on North Korea, May 02, 1949.*”; Katheryn Weathersby, “Should We Fear This?: Stalin and the Danger of War with America,” *Cold War International History Project working paper* 39 (2002), 21-23.

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, “*Ciphred Telegram from Shtykov to Vyshinsky, 3 September, 1949,*” accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112129> (accessed April 21, 2015).

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, “*Telegram from Tunkin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in Reply to 11 September Telegram, 24 September 1949,*” accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112133> (accessed April 21, 2015).

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Digital Archives, “*Telegram from Tunkin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry in Reply to 11 September Telegram, September 14, 1949,*” accessed April 21, 2015, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112132> (accessed April 21, 2015).

Kim Il Sung's Works

Foreign Language Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 1: June 1930-December 1945*. Pyongyang, Korea: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1980.

Foreign Language Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 2: January-December 1946*. Pyongyang, Korea: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1980.

Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 4: January-December 1948*. Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981.

Foreign Languages Publishing House, *Kim Il Sung Works 5: January-June 1950*. Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981.

The Korea Worker's Party Press. *Kim Il Sung's writing 6*. Pyongyang: The Korea Worker's Party Press, 1979.

조선 노동당 출판사. *김일성 선집*. 평양: 조선 노동당 출판사, 1953.

조선 로동당출판사. *김일성 저작집 6*. 평양: 조선로동당 출판사, 1979.

Other Primary Sources

국사편찬위원회. *소련군정문서, 남조선 정세보고서, 1946-1947: 러시아 연방 국방성 중앙문서보관소 (The Korean War Report of General Razubayev)*. 서울: 국사편찬위원회, 2003.

국방부 군사편찬연구소. *소련 군사고문단장 라주바예프의 6.25 전쟁보고서 1 (The Korean War Report of General Razubayev)*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001.

국사편찬위원회. *쉬띠꼬프일기, 1946-1948 (Former Soviet Ambassador Shitykov's Diaries)*. 서울: 국사편찬위원회, 2004.

Daily reports by the Soviet embassy in Pyongyang to Moscow

ЦАМО РФ, фонд 5, опись 918795, дело 122, лист 9-14.

United States Military, Far East Command. Record Group 332, Box 23, G-2 Periodic Report no. 194. 8.

“Yu Song-chol’s Testimony.” December 27, 1990, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service – East Asian Survey (FBIS-EAS)* (Washington D.C. : Central Intelligence Agency) Part 10, 29.

“Biography of Yu Sung Chol” in *The Biographies of Soviet Korean Leaders*, The Library of Congress, 8-9 accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/asian/SovietKorean.html> (accessed March 1, 2015).

Jang Jin Sung’s Testimony. See accessed March 1, 2015. <http://www.chogabje.com/> (Accessed March 1, 2015)

Hwan Jang Yop’s Testimonial, See accessed March 1, 2015. <http://www.chogabje.com/> (accessed March 1, 2015)

Secondary Sources in English

Books in English

Appleman, Roy. *South to the Nakdong, North to the Yalu, The United States Army in the Korean War*. Washington DC: US GPO, 1961.

Armstrong, Charles K. *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003.

Bacevich, Andrew J. *Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country*. New York, NY: Picador, 2014.

Baik, Bong. *Kim Il Sung Biography 2: From Building Democratic Korea to Chullima Flight*. Tokyo, Japan: Miraisha, 1970.

Bailes, Kendall. *Technology and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: Origins of the Soviet Technical Intelligentsia, 1917-1941*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2013.

Chen, Jian, *China's road to the Korean War: the making of the Sino-American confrontation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Cumings, Bruce. *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 1: Liberation and the emergence of separate regimes, 1945-1947*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981. ; *The Origins of the Korean War, Volume 2: The roaring of the cataract, 1947-1950*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990. ; *The Korean War: A History*. New York: The Modern Library, 2010.

Ferguson, Nial. *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005.

Fitzpatrick, Sheila. *The Russian Revolution*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Foreign Languages Press. *Selective Works of Mao Tse-tung*. Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1965. ; *Selected Military Writing of Mao Tse-Tung*. Peking, China: Foreign Language Press, 1967. ; *Selective Works of Mao Tse-Tung*. Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1965. ; *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung*. Peking, China: Foreign Languages Press, 1966.

Friedman, Thomas L. and Michael Mandelbaum. *That Used to be us: how America fell behind in the world it invented and how we can come back*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.

Gaddis, John Lewis. *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Glantz, David M. *The Soviet conduct of war*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Soviet Army Studies Office, 1987. ; *The Soviet conduct of tactical maneuver: spearhead of the offensive*. London, Frank Cass, 1991. ; *Soviet military operational art: in pursuit of deep battle*. London: Frank Cass, 1991. ; *The Soviet Strategic Offensive in Manchuria, 1945 'August Storm.'* London: Frank Cass, 2003.

Glantz, David M. and Jonathan M. House. *When Titan Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*. Lawrence, KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1995.

Goncharov, Sergei N. John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partner: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993.

Haas, Richard N. *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America's House in Order*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2014.

Henderson, Gregory. *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968.

Harrison, Mark. eds. *Guns and Rubuls: the defense industry in the Stalinist state*. New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 2008.; *Soviet planning in peace and war, 1938-1945*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Harrison, Mark and John Barber, *The Soviet Defence-Industry Complex from Stalin to Khrushchev*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Haruki,Wada. *The Korean War: An International History*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

Hasegawa,Tsuyoshy. *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the surrender of Japan*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

Higgins, Marguerite. *War in Korea: The Report of a Woman Combat Correspondent*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1951.

Kim, Suzy. *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.

Kissinger, Henry. *World Order*. New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2014. ; *Diplomacy*. New York City, NY: Simon & Schuster INC, 1994.

Kokoshin, Andrei A. *Soviet Strategic Thought, 1917-91*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998.

Korea Institute of Military History (KIMH), *The Korean War I*. Seoul: Korea Institute of Military History, 1997.

Lankov, Andrei. *From Stalin to Kim Il Sung: The Formation of North Korea 1945-1960*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002. ; *Crisis in North Korea: the failure of de-stalinization, 1956*. Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

Lee, Kent D. ed. *Aleksandr A. Svechin: Strategy*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: East View Publications, 1992.

Lewis, Adrian R. *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from the Second World War to Operating Enduring Freedom*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge, 2012.

Li, Xiaobing, Allan R Millett and Bin Yu, eds. *Mao's Generals Remember Korea*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2001.

Millett, Allan R. *Their war for Korea: American, Asian, and European combatants and civilians, 1945-1953*. Washington D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2002. ; *The War For Korea, 1945-1950: a house burning*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2005. ; *A War For Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from North*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010.

Nye Jr., Joseph S. *Is the American Century Over*. New York, NY: Polity, 2015.

Palmer, Scott. *Dictatorship of the Air: aviation culture and the fate of modern Russia*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Ree, Erik Van. *Socialism in One Zone: Stalin's policy in Korea, 1945-1947*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

Ridway, Matthew B. *The Korean War*. New York, NY: Da Capo Paperback, 1967.

Roberts, Geoffrey. *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953*. London: Yale University Press, 2006.

Salisbury, Harrison E. *War between Russia and China*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1969.

Samuelson, Lennart and Vitaly Shlykov. *Plans for Stalin's War Machine: Tukhachevskii and Military-Economic Planning, 1925-1941*. London: Macmilian Press LTD, 2000.

Scalapino, Robert A. and Chong-sik Lee, *Communism in Korea: Part One: The Movement and Communism in Korea: Part Two The Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David. *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire on the Path to War with Japan*. Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001. ; *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

Shechter, Jerrold L. and Vyacheslav V. Luchkov, eds. *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tape*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1990.

Shen, Zhihua, translated by Neil Silver, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

Shen, Zhihua and Danhui Li. *After Leaning to One Side: China and Its Allies in the Cold War*. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011.

Simmons, Robert. *The Strained Alliance: Peking, Pyongyang, Moscow and the Politics of the Korean War*. New York, NY: Free Press, 1975.

Stoecker, Sally W. *Forging Stalin's Army: Marshal Tukhachevsky and the Politics of Military Innovation*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998.

Stone, David R., eds. *The Soviet Union at War, 1941-1945*. New York, NY: Pen & Sword Books, 2010. ; *Hammer and Rifle: The Militarization of the Soviet Union, 1926-1933*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

Stueck, William. *The Korean War: An International History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995. ; *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Suh, Dae-Sook. *Korean Communism Movement, 1918-1948*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967. ; *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988. ; eds. *Koreans in the Soviet Union*. Honolulu, Hawaii: The University of Hawaii Press, 1987.

Talbott, Strobe, eds. *Khrushchev Remembers*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1971.

Thornton, Richard C. *Odd Man Out: Truman, Stalin, Mao and the Origins of the Korean War*. Washington D.C.: Brassey's, 2000.

Triandafilov, V. K. *The Nature of the Operations of Contemporary Armies*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1994.

Trotsky, Leon. *How the Revolution armed: the military writings and speeches of Leon Trotsky* Volume 1. London: New Park Publications, 1979-1981.

Tsygankov, Andrei P. *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2010.

United States Army Center of Military History. *Korea 1950*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996.

Whiting, Allen S. *China Cross the Yalu: The Decision To Enter the Korean War*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Zakaria, Fareed. *The Post-American World: Release 2.0*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 2011.

Zhang, Shu Cuang. *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995.

Zubok, Valdislav M. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Articles / Book Chapters in English

Bjorge, Gary J. *Leavenworth paper number 22: Moving the Enemy: Operational Art in the Chinese PLA's Huai Hai Campaign*. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004.

Cumings, Bruce "Corporatism in North Korea." *Journal of Korean Studies*, 4 (1982-1983): 269-294.

Han, Hongkoo. "Colonial Origins of Juche: The Minsaengdan Incident of the 1930s and the Birth of the North Korea – China Relationship." In *Origins of North Korea's Juche: Colonialism, War, and Development*, edited by Jae-Jung Suh. New York, NY: Lexington Press, 2013. ; *Wounded Nationalism: The Minsaengdan Incident and Kim Il Sung in Eastern Manchuria*. Ph.D. dissertation., University of Washington, 1999.

Jung, Hyun-soo with Gyoo Kahng. The Shytykov Diaries. See "New Evidence on the Korean War." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter, 1995/1996): 69-93.

Kim, Donggil, "Stalin's Korea U-Turn: The USSR's Evolving Security Strategy and the Origins of the Korean War." *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 24, no.1 (June 2011): 89-114.

Kim, Donggil and William Stueck, "Did Stalin Lure the United States into the Korean War?" *North Korea International Documentation Project* (June, 2008), E-Dossier #1

Kim, Kook Hun. "The North Korean People's Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1945-1950." PhD dissertation., University of London, 1989.

Kipp, Jacob W. *Mass, Mobility, and the Red Army's Road to Operational Art, 1918-1936*. Fort Leavenworth, KS : Foreign Military Studies Office, 1988.

Kraus, Charles. "Mutual Dependence in Sino-North Korean Relations: Evidence from the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War.", SAIS Asia Conference, Washington D.C. (April 6, 2012): 6-7.; "Bridging East Asia's Revolutions: The Overseas Chinese in North Korea, 1945-1950." *The Journal of Northeast Asian History* 11, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 37-70.

Kraus, Charles and Adam Cathcart, "Nation, Ethnicity, and the Post-Manchukuo Order in the Sino-Korean Border Region." in *Key Papers on Korea: Essays Celebrating 25 Years of the Centre of Korean Studies, SOAS, University of London*, edited by Andrew David Jackson. Boston: Global Oriental, 2013: 79-81.; "Internationalist Culture in North Korea, 1945-1950." *The Review of Korean Studies* 11, no. 3 (September 2008): 123-148. ; "The Bonds of Brotherhood: New Evidence on Sino-North Korean Exchanges, 1950-1954." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 13, no. 3 (Summer, 2011): 27-51.

Mansourov, Alexandre Yourievich. "Communist War Coalition Formation and the Origins of the Korean War." Ph.D dissertation., Columbia University, 1997.

Omelicheva, Mariya Y. "Russian Security and Nuclear Policies: Successor to the Superpower Arsenal?" In *International Studies Online*, eds. R. A. Denmark. <http://www.isacompendium.com/public/online> (accessed April 13, 2015).

Person, James F. "New Evidence on North Korea in 1956." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 16 (2014): 447-527.

Shen, Zhihua. "Sino-Soviet Relations and the Origins of the Korean War: Stalin's Strategic Goals in the Far East." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2, no.2, Spring (2000), 44-68.; "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no.2 (2010): 211-230.; "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War." in *The Korean War at Sixty: New Approaches to the Study of the Korean War*, edited by Steven Casey. New York, NY: Routledge, 2012.

Sorokin, G. "Gosplan During the Years of the Great Patriotic War." *Problems in Economics*, Volume 14, Issue 3 (1971): 62-78.

Weathersby, Kathryn. "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-1950: New Evidence from Russian Archives." In *Cold War International History Project working paper* 8 (1993); "To Attack or Not Attack?: Stalin, Kim Il Sung, and Prelude to War." In *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 5(1995); "New Evidence on the Korean War." In *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (1995): 36; "New Evidence on the Korean War." In *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 11 (1998): 176-199.; "Should We Fear This? : Stalin and the Danger of War with America." In *Cold War International History Project working paper* 39 (2002); "New Evidence on North Korea." In *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 14/15 (2003): 5-138.

Secondary Sources in Korean

Books in Korean

장준만. *한국현대사산책: 1950년대편 1 권*. 서울: 인물과 사상사, 2004.

국방부 군사편찬연구소. *6.25 전쟁사 1: 전쟁의 배경과 원인*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2004. ; *6.25 전쟁사 2: 북한의 전면남침과 초기 방어전투*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2005.

김성보, 기광서 and 이신철. *사진과 그림으로 보는 북한 현대사*. 서울: 웅진지식하우스, 2004.

김성보 and 이종석. *북한의 역사 1 건국과 인민민주주의의 경험 1945-1960. ; 북한의 역사 2 주체사상과 유일체제 1960-1994*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2011.

김성호. *1930년대 연변 민생단사건 연구*. 서울: 백산자료원, 1999.

김영호. *한국전쟁의 기원과 전개과정*. 서울: 성신여자대학교 출판부, 2006.

김준엽. eds. *북한연구자료집*. 서울: 고려대 아세아문제연구소, 1974.

김중생. *조선의용군의 밀입북과 6.25 전쟁*. 서울: 명지출판사, 2000.

데이빗 쑤이. *중국의 6.25 전쟁 참전*. 서울: 다와, 2011.

박명림. *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 1: 결정과 반발*. 서울: 나남출판, 1996. ; *한국전쟁의 발발과 기원 2: 기원과 원인*. 서울: 나남출판, 1996.

박병엽. *박병엽 증언록 1 조선민주주의인민공화국의 탄생: 전 노동당 고위간부가 겪은 건국 비화*. 서울: 선인, 2010. ; *박병엽 증언록 2 전 노동당 고위간부가 본 비밀회동 김일성과 박헌영 그리고 여운형*. 서울: 선인, 2010.

백선엽. *Memoir: The Korean War*. 서울: 시대정신, 1989.

서동만. *북조선사회주의 체제성립사 1945-1961*. 서울: 선인, 2005.

서동만 저작집 간행 위원회. *북조선 연구*. 서울: 창비, 2010.

손자, 노병천역. *The Art of War: 도해손자병법 (孫子兵法)*. 서울: 가나출판사, 1996.

시오토마이 노브오. *모스크바와 김일성: 냉전기의 북한 1945-1961*. 서울: 논형, 2012.

신주백. *만주지역 한인의 민족운동사, 1920-1945*. 서울: 아세아문화사, 1999.

염인호. *조선의용군의 독립운동*. 서울: 나남출판, 2001. ; *조선의용대와 조선의용군*. 서울: 한국 독립운동사 편찬위원회 독립기념관 한국독립운동사연구소, 2009. ; 또 *하나의 한국전쟁: 만주조선인의 조국과 전쟁*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2010. ; *조선의용대와 조선의용군*. 서울: 한국 독립운동사 편찬위원회 독립기념관 한국독립운동사연구소, 2009.

오군. *승리의 개선가를 울리던 그날 리흥광지대*. 심양: 료녕민족출판사, 1986.

온창일. *韓民族戰爭史*. 서울: 集文堂, 2001.

와다 하루키. *김일성과 만주항일전쟁*. 서울: 창작과비평사, 1992. ; *한국전쟁*. 서울: 창작과비평사, 1999. ; *북조선 유격대국가에서 정규군국가론*. 서울: 돌베개, 2002.

이정 박현영 전집 편집 위원회. *이정 박현영 전집 Volume 1 - 9*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2004.

이종석. *북한 주둔 중국인민지원군 철수에 관한 연구*. 서울: 세종연구소, 2014. ; *조선로동당연구*. Seoul: 역사비평사, 1997. ; *북한-중국관계 1945-2000*. 서울: 중심, 2000. ; *새로 쓴 현대 북한의 이해*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2000. ; *신 북한정치론*. 서울: 동림사, 2005.

임경석. *한국 사회주의의 기원*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2003. ; *잊을 수 없는 혁명가들에 대한 기록*. 서울: 역사비평사, 2008.

장준익. *北韓 人民軍隊史*. 서울: 瑞文堂, 1991.

정현수. *중국조선족 증언으로 본 한국전쟁*. 서울: 선인, 2006.

조지프 C. 굴든. *한국전쟁: 알려지지 않은 이야기*. 서울: 일월서각, 1982.

주영복. *내가 겪은 조선전쟁 1*. 서울, 고려원, 1990.

Articles / Book Chapters in Korean

기광서. “소련의 한국전 개입과정.” *국제정치논총* 40 no.3 (November, 2000): 150-172.; “슈티코프, 해방 후 북소관계의 실력자.” *내일을 여는 역사* 24 (June, 2006): 142-154.; “해방 후 소련의 대한반도정책과 스티코프의 활동.” *중소연구* 93 (May, 2002): 161-192.; “[역비논단]해방 직후 조선공산당에 대한 소련의 입장.” *역사비평* 65 (November, 2003): 227-248.; “1940년대 전반 소련군 88 독립보병여단 내 김일성 그룹의 동향.” *역사와 현실* 28 (1998): 275-280.; “특집: 역사용어 바로 쓰기, 소군정은 실재했는가.” *역사비평* 73 (November, 2005): 77-82.; “북한무력형성과 북소관계.” *중소연구* 103 (2004): 231.; “[역비논단]해방 직후 조선공산당에 대한 소련의 입장.” *역사비평* 65 (November, 2003): 230-231.

김광운. “전쟁 이전 북한 인민군의 창설.” Edited by 국방부 군사편찬연구소. *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 1*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001.

김국현, “북한군의 건설과 패퇴 (1945-1950).” *군사논단* No.61 (Spring, 2010): 18.

김영택. “[연구논문] 한국전쟁기 남한 내 적색 빨치산의 재건과 소멸(1950.10.5-1954.4.5)전남 총사령부와 6 개 지구를 중심으로.” *한국 근현대사 연구* 27 (December, 2003): 133-166.

김종준. “한국전쟁기 서부경남지역 빨치산의 조직과 활동: 1950년 10월~1951년 6월을 중심으로.” *제노사이드 연구* 2 (August, 2007): 15-61.

김진환. “빨치산, 역사의 격랑에 선 사람.” *역사비평* 94 (February, 2011): 298-328.

김태현. “조중연합사가 조선인민군 재편성에 미친 영향.” *軍事* no 76 (September 2010): 221.

문정일. “증언 중국전선에서 싸운 조선의용군의 항일전쟁,” *역사비평* 12 (August, 1990): 375.

백선엽. “백선엽의 6·25 징비록-74: 술에 취했던 그날 새벽, 김일성 군대가 38 선을 넘어왔다.” *Chosun Ilbo Premium Chosun*, July 11, 2014.

http://premium.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/10/06/2014100602987.html (accessed March 1, 2015)

백학순. “중국내전시 북한의 중국공산당을 위한 군사원조: 북한군 과병 및 후방기지 제공.” *한국과 국제정치* 10, no. 1 (1994):263-281.; “中國共內戰期の滿洲朝鮮人部隊에 관한 研究 (1948-1950)-中國人民解放軍 第4野戰軍獨立 15師團을 중심으로.” *한국독립운동사연구* 22 (August 2004): 198.

신범식. “소련의 북한군사지원.” In *한국 전쟁사의 새로운 연구 1*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001, 557-624.

염인호. “해방 후 중국 동북지방 조선인 부대의 활동과 북한입국: 중국인민해방군 제 164 사단을 중심으로.” Edited by 국방부 군사편찬연구소. *한국전쟁사의 새로운 연구 2*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2002, 133-190.; “중국 연변 조선족의 민족정체성에 대한 고찰(1945.8-1950.말).” *한국사연구회, 한국사연구* 140 (March, 2008): 147-148.; “특별연구 조선의용군.” *역사비평* 28 (August 1994), 200-205.; “[특집] 조선의용대의 창설과 한·중 연대.” *한국근현대사연구* 11, (November, 1999): 136-167.

이덕일. “연해주의 소련 극동적군 88 여단의 결성배경과 성격.” *한국근현대사연구* 6 (1997), 163-164.; “民生團 사건이 東北抗日聯軍 2 軍에 미친 영향.” *韓國史研究* 91 (1995): 129-166.

이선아. “[연구논문] 한국전쟁 전후 빨치산의 형성과 활동.” *역사연구* 13 (December, 2003): 155-188.; “여순사건 이후 빨치산 활동과 그 영향.” *역사연구* 20 (June, 2011): 175-205.; “한국전쟁기 강원·경북지역 빨치산 활동 연구노트.” *역사연구* 23 (December, 2012): 183-199.

이재훈. “1949-50 년 중국인민해방군 내 조선인 부대의 ‘입북’에 대한 북중소 3 국의 입장.” *國際政治論叢* 45, no. 3 (2005): 171-193.

이종석. “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 1 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 1).” *전략연구* 11, (November 1997): 274-302.; “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 2 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Korean War 2).” *전략연구* 12, (April 1998): 238-256.; “국공 내전 시기 북한 중국 관계 3 (Sino-North Korean Relations during the Chinese Civil War 3).” *전략연구* 13, (September 1998): 240-280.; “북한 지도집단과 항일투쟁”, in *해방전후사의 인식* 5, edited by 김남식. 서울: 한길사, 1989.

장성진, “6.25 전쟁이전 만주 조선인 입북 부대의 성격에 대한 고찰.” *정신문화연구* 36, no. 1 (2013): 156-182.

전현수. “특별연구 「쉬띠꼬프 일기」가 말하는 북한정권의 성립과정.” *역사비평* 32 (August, 1995): 133-162.; “한국현대사와 소련의 역할(1945~1948), <<쉬띠꼬프일기>>연구.” *경북사학* 27 (August, 2004): 1-28.; “소련군의 북한 진주와 대 북한정책.” *한국독립운동사연구* 9 (December, 1995), 348.; “소련 공군의 한국전 참전.” Edited by 국방부 군사편찬연구소. *한국 전쟁사의 새로운 연구 1*. 서울: 국방부 군사편찬연구소, 2001, 625-672.

정병일, “북중 관계에 미친 연안파의 위상 재조명: 정치 군사적 평가를 중심으로.” *社會科學研究* 18, no. 2 (2010): 282-387.; “북한국가건설에 미친 연안파의 역할.” *한국정치학회보* 46, no. 5 (2012): 145-167.; “북·중 관계에 미친 연안파의 위상 재조명: 정치·군사적 평가를 중심으로.” *사회과학연구* 18 (2), (August 2010): 305.; “반민생단투쟁의 정치사적 의의: 김일성 부상과 조국광복회 성립의 동인.” *社會科學研究* 16, no 1 (2008): 578-664.

한홍구. “민생단 사건의 비교사적 연구.” *韓國文化* 25(2000): 193-229.

Weathersby, Kathryn and 강규형. “북-중-소 삼각관계가 6.25 전쟁 과정과 전후 북한외교 행태에 미친 영향: 기밀해제문서를 중심으로.” *정신문화연구* 33, no. 3 (2010):135.

Internet

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acculturation>. (Accessed March 1, 2015)

The Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Factbook,” accessed March 1, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2125.html> (accessed March 1, 2015).